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23 October 1984

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ARAB CONFERENCE SEEKS TO IMPROVE GRAIN PRODUCTION

Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Jul 84 p 15

[Article: "Recommendations of the First Arab Grain Industry Conference: A Call for the Adoption of a Science and Technology Plan, Creation of a Strategic Reserve, and Increasing Production Through the Development of Production Methods"]

[Text] Amman - AL-RA'Y - The First Arab Grain Industry Conference, which had convened under the sponsorship of His Majesty King Husayn and was jointly organized by the Arab Food Industries Union and the Ministry of Supplies, concluded its business yesterday evening at the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

Thanks to Husayn

Those attending the conference expressed much thanks to the king, the government, and the people of Jordan for the hospitable and generous welcome they had received from them; they wished the best in progress and prosperity for Jordan on its road to development and construction in the service of its people and in the interest of the Arab nation, under the aegis of His Majesty King Husayn.

During the conference, those in attendance hailed the efforts made by the Ministry of Supplies and expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Arab Food Industries Union.

The conference issued a concluding statement in which the conferees recognized the great responsibility of all concerned Arabs in the Agricultural sector to increase production and improve the quality of produce in order to meet growing needs; to work in the industrial sector towards the nationalization of world grain technology in its various phases to fit the Arab situation; to work in the economic sector to deepen the meaning of the Arab Common Market and establish a unified and organized Arab position with regard to the importation of grains and their movement within the Arab nation. These imported grains will be used to establish a strategic Arab reserve through joint Arab enterprises, employing all the world's developments and trends in grain production in the Arab nation by encouraging the use of its manpower, financial and natural resources,

and transferred and adopted technology, and through the adoption of an Arab science and technology plan as a part of a comprehensive Arab plan aimed in the short term at establishing an Arab grain strategy for production, processing, marketing, and creating a strategic reserve. The conference's recommendations are detailed below.

In the agricultural sector, the conference recommended increasing production by expanding the area under cultivation, increasing the output per hectare by improving production methods through mechanization and by introducing grains during the cycles of cultivation, increasing agricultural investment, and giving increased attention to guiding and preparing Arab programs to limit the waste of grain.

With regard to price policy, the conference recommended that special concessions be extended to grains. The conference also made other recommendations, listed below.

Increased Production

The conference called for estimates to increase grain production and the adoption of the methods of industrial agricultural complexes as one way of increasing production and improving quality.

It called for increasing current levels of fertilization, called upon those concerned in Arab countries to preserve agricultural lands as a means of production and development, and expressed the hope that all Arab nations would organize the work of scientific research groups. It called upon Arab nations to encourage the establishment of integrated service centers for grain cultivating equipment. The conference stressed the vital role played by the Arab agricultural press, and making use of the experiences of some Arab countries in the establishment of grain institutes and councils.

The Grain Industry

In the grain industry sector, the conference recommended that greater concern be given to this vital industrial sector by the industrial financing sector. With regard to the grain production equipment industry, the conference likewise called for the integration of the Arab countries in the use of existing milling capabilities in order to employ the surpluses of some areas for the benefit of others and to encourage and support existing industries to produce equipment and parts for automated bakeries. It called for inspections of grain at the time of receipt to assure that it conforms to contract specifications; it stressed the necessity of mixing various grains to obtain flour with appropriate characteristics, and of preparing the necessary studies to detail the optimum mixtures of grains prior to or after milling, and studies to stipulate the ideal volume economically and strategically for mills in Arab countries. With regard to science and technology, the conference recommended a study of the reasons for the increase in waste percentages in Arab bread and establishing a standard Arab loaf that will minimize waste.

Strategic Reserve

Concerning a pan-Arab strategic grain reserve, the conference recommended that the Arab countries store their surplus grain in established silos, silos now being built, or in planned silos in cooperation with the Arab Food Industries Union. It recommended the creation of strategic reserves for one year's supply in individual countries, and a pan-Arab reserve of six months; it recommended the establishment of strategic reserve centers, and the formation of a council from the Arab Agricultural Development Organization and the Arab Food Industries Union whose work would be coordinated with the International Food and Agricultural Organization and the West Asian Economic Council in order to estimate future annual requirements for strategic grains in all Arab countries until the year 2000 in light of changes in consumer demand.

The conference called for joint studies by concerned Arab interests on pan-Arab food security projects.

Health Requirements

The conference recommended the centralization of health requirements, the technical management of bakeries and the joint organization of specialized presentations to inform technicians of matters pertaining to grain industry technology, the exchange of information between Arab countries through the Arab Food Industries Union concerning contracts concluded to establish silos, mills, and bakeries, provision by the Arab Food Industries Union of scientific and technical consultation to all Arab countries, and the utilization of accumulated expertise in those countries. Economically, the conference recommended continued increases in Arab grain consumption, with an awareness of all efforts made nationally and on the pan-Arab level to increase Arab production. It is estimated that in the year 2000 pan-Arab requirements for grain will be more than 100 million tons, while production will not reach that level. In the period between 1979 and 1981 pan-Arab grain imports decreased about 11 percent in figures for world exports. Wheat was imported in the greatest quantities, comprising 17 percent of all world exports; it was followed by rice at about 16 percent, then barley at 14 percent, while yellow corn only amounted to about 4 percent of all world exports.

The conference recommended the following: The necessity of coordination between importers in Arab nations in order to attend to strategic considerations. The conference called for the immediate adoption of procedures to limit the great increase in demand and at the same time to encourage local products to develop as quickly as possible in order to reintroduce some varieties of grain such as barley and corn for human consumption, to use modern agricultural methods, and to diversify the diet of the Arab citizen by increasing the consumption of vegetables and legumes in order to minimize grain consumption and use grains for animal consumption and feed products. The conference called for the establishment of wheat reserves no smaller than the minimum amount recommended in Arab food security studies; it called for measures to guide consumption at the national

and pan-Arab levels, the centralization of national agricultural enterprises, the expansion of existing projects, the encouragement of pan-Arab grain projects financed at the pan-Arab level, increased financing resources in the Arab funds in order to finance joint Arab projects, attention to the production of various breads with features that minimize losses, the establishment of a specialized Arab center for the study of grains, the provision of material support for the Arab Food Industries Union, a review of the principles of the policy of support as appropriate and of the gravity of the gulf between the producer and the consumer, the utilization of the benefits of large production by following policies that rectify the fragmentation of property, connecting guidance policies with production policies, and reviewing the practice of Arab price policies to increase production quantities and improve quality. We recommend a study of importation policies and harvest times in producer countries, as well as a study of the costs of delivery at the site of origin in order to reduce the cost of transportation as much as possible, and to achieve the best local distribution to grain silos and mills.

This conference, which lasted 4 days, was attended by members of the Arab League and Arab and international delegations and organizations, as well as the Arab agricultural press.

9310

CSO: 4404/607

LIBYA, MOROCCO TAKE NEW STEPS TOWARD NORTH AFRICAN UNIFICATION

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1451, 24 Aug 84 pp 18, 19

/Article by Amin al-Siba'i: "The Federation of Reconciliation and Normalization: The Bilateral Plan Is a Stage in the Formulation of a Maghreb Cooperation Council"/

/Text/ The sudden official announcement of the agreement King Hassan and President al-Qadhdhafi reached at the Oujda summit over the draft federation between the two countries has raised numerous questions that touch on the extent to which efforts to settle disputes among Arab countries and restore "normalization" to relations among them can go in preparing for the coming stage, which is fraught with danger.

These questions have resulted in the specification of some important points in an Arab plan which could lead to a new Arab detente, in which Egypt would return to the Arab group and to cooperation based at least on a minimum of mutual understanding over common issues, in the event its stages of reconciliation are applied.

The first calm political comment to be issued last week concerning the agreement between Morocco and Libya and the submission of the draft federation between the two countries to a plebiscite in order to determine its destiny linked this declaration to concentrated Arab efforts which have been devoted for a number of weeks to a single plan aimed at containing Arab disputes and small wars and pointing comprehensive Arab dialogue toward a summit and minimum agreement.

The evaluation of the bilateral federation plan between Morocco and Libya made in most Arab capitals concluded that there would be positive results in its initial stages, although people's views differed over the extent to which federation and union plans can endure and survive in the light of the results of previous experiences.

However, an Arab politician who has occupied the position of prime minister in his country in successive periods since the forties and knows as much as any Arab official about the obstacles to union plans, stated, in the context of a preliminary evaluation of the development in Morocco, that the Iraq-Iran

war, the events of the Gulf, the mines in the Red Sea and the threat to the security of the Mediterranean, as well as the occupation of Lebanon and Israel's plunder of its water resources, have all led to the emergence of Arab activity which started quietly and far from the limelight a number of months ago to persuade Arab officials first of all and the officials of some moderate Islamic countries second of all to adopt the sections of a draft tabulating a number of stages which, in the event agreement is reached on its application, will end up at a point distinguished by the "normalization" of inter-Arab relations and the revival and restoration of effectiveness to the league of Arab States, provided that that include a resolution of the problem of Egypt's return to the Arab world and that the page of its alienation from the Arab group be turned over.

The stages of the plan to settle Arab disputes, as the Arab politician said, do not go to exaggerated optimism concerning the limits of placing Arab unity at the top of the list of desired results, because the moderate Arab forces which are planning for Arab normalization and a minimum agreement know full well that emphasis on unity, unification and federal plans at the inappropriate time, without preparation, groundbreaking and arrangements, will result in thwarting efforts to settle disputes and will not bring the unity plans to fruition.

The plan which efforts were made to apply is aimed at establishing a form of political, economic and security cooperation among the countries of the Maghreb, after a solid trilateral settlement of the problem of the Sahara in a manner which, in its foundations and goals, is similar to the form of cooperation that exists among the countries of the Gulf in the context of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The remaining stages of the Arabic-Islamic plan for normalization and the settlement of disputes stipulate that the problem of the Palestinian schisms be resolved in a reasonable way and Palestinian efforts and resources be unified before the Israeli leadership regains its political and military strength and proceeds with the execution of its schemes in Jerusalem, the Bank, Lebanon and the adjoining countries.

The general sections of the settlement plan include other goals, including the strengthening of "unity" and cooperation among the countries of the Gulf, the development of this cooperation at the coming Gulf conference, the exertion of greater efforts to stop the Iraqi-Iranian war, a meeting with Syria specifically over a position which will enable the Arab group to support its stands and benefit from its role following the elimination or reduction of the causes for alienation between it and certain parties, and, after that, an approach toward a strategy which does not now define Arab unity as a goal for itself that is near at hand but rather tries to revive the Arab dialogue required for cooperation in the area of political confrontation, at least in basic affairs.

If it is to attain its objectives before the end of this year, this settlement and normalization plan will depend on the obvious role played by Arab countries which are far removed from the locations of the bilateral dispute between certain countries of the league.

Evidence and indications of this role emerged before and during the summit consultations which took place among the leaders of the countries of the Maghreb before the declaration of the federation plan by Morocco and Libya. There was explicit discussion of the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in reducing the obstacles to direct dialogue among the countries of the Maghreb and the likelihood of a meeting at the minisummit level to resolve the Sahara problem in the presence of King Fahd and the leaders of the countries of the Maghreb. This conception is still viable, although some obstacles, conditions and reservations remain.

Some party and political forces in the Maghreb area prefer to have attention confined to issues that can be handled without exposing the efforts to the obstacles to union plans that rise up along the road, and to handle the issues which raise disputes, such as the problem of the Sahara, with mutual understanding whose positive results could support a unity or federation plan by democratic means.

The former prime minister and present minister of state of Morocco, Maati Bouabid, says that finding a solution to the Sahara conflict in the Arab framework is a national requirement owing to the extent of the negative repercussions of this and other Arab struggles on the Arab situation.

He adds that the responsibilities for preserving Arab security are Arab in the first place, that any practical step that in effect realizes the notion of building the Maghreb as an economic axis, human conglomeration and political force will enjoy the blessings of all, and that the unity which is desired in this context lies basically in the coordination of political positions, the building of bridges of cooperation among economic institutions, legislative bodies and political organizations, and collective confrontation of the various challenges threatening the existence of the Arab and Islamic nation in this area and others.

The talk about plans for the union of Maghreb countries is old; the most prominent elements in their files are the facts which determine the role of some major countries and Israel in obstructing its progress and isolating this part of the Arab world from possible meetings based on unity within any possible framework.

After reviewing these files, the volume of the obstacles that have obstructed a number of federal and union plans presented to the countries of the Maghreb at various times becomes apparent. The Libyan-Tunisian union plan which was discussed at the Jerba summit in the early seventies and collapsed after only a few days was not the only instance when federation plans failed.

Arab diplomats who have lived through and monitored some stages of the federation plans state that the phase following the independence the countries of the Maghreb won was one in which the possibilities and plans for federation were studied, but they also were a stage in which plans to sabotage these tendencies arose, and that there was a plan which had the goal of sanctifying fragmentation and alienation among the countries of the Maghreb through an attempt to establish axes of a cooperative character between one body and another on the basis of the fragmentation which in the future would obstruct all existing possibilities for a successful unification remote from the policy of axes and isolation.

The dialogue which went on among the leaders of Morocco, Algeria, Libya and Tunisia during the past week, which took place after the Oujda summit, was an opportunity for setting out the necessary basic principles required for reconciliation and the settlement of disputes, preparatory to a transition to a stage of unity which could endure.

In Morocco, officials clearly stated that the step King Hassan and President al-Qadhdhafi embarked on "lie within the context of an initiative to build the political union of the countries of the Maghreb as a historic step for the sake of Arab unity and full devotion to the Palestinian cause, the cause of Jerusalem and confrontation of the dangers threatening the Arab nation and the Islamic world."

The step produced an echo of the utmost importance in Morocco when it was observed that political parties and organizations proceeded to take the position of supporting the decision in principle and determining their positions in an attempt to turn the parliamentary elections which will take place in Morocco next 14 September to choose one third of the members of the Chamber of Deputies into a sort of referendum supplementing the plebiscite which will determine the fate of the federal plan.

In Algeria, reactions were restricted to observations on what was heppening in this context, to the focussing of attention on its dimensions and to incessant talk about the inevitability of reaching acceptable solutions to the Sahara problem far removed from any polarized policies or solutions.

When these subjects were discussed between the Libyan president and the Algerian president, Chadli Bendjedid, the talk was frank.

The Algerian newspaper AL-SHA'B said that the treaty of friendship and brotherhood concluded by Algeria, Tunisia and Mauritania remains the optimum framework for any realistic, logical plan to establish a Maghreb Arab federation.

At this point, some circles close to events in Morocco answered people who counsel avoidance of the policy of axes, isolation and a headlong rush into union formulas before the existing disputes are settled by hinting at some forms of activity which began last week in regard to the federal plan.

In the context of the response to this counsel, they cite reports which affirm that consultation on the draft of a specific conception for resolving the problem of the Sahara in an Arab context is underway.

These people say that the outline of the draft of the solution was presented at the Oujda summit and that some sections were added to it. Then it was presented at the bilateral summit between Bendjedid and al-Qadhafi in Algeria, and it was finally presented at the meeting which took place between al-Qadhafi and the prime minister of Tunisia, Mohamed Mzali.

The draft stresses the importance of ending the dispute over the Sahara in order to support the notion of the federal plans and states that these drafts are totally remote from formulations based on isolation or on axes, because the goal essentially is a specific one, that of establishing a union cooperation council, if one may use the term, among the countries of the Maghreb, then of turning toward common action aimed at eliminating disputes with other Arab countries in the east and the Maghreb together, opening the door principally to possibilities for establishing a dialogue with Egypt as part of carefully studied Arab coordination, then proceeding with an Arab dialogue in depth within the context of the comprehensive summit for drawing up cooperation policy, if only within its lowest limits, in order to deal with existing dangers.

These reports add that the people who submitted the draft of the federal formula do not want it to meet the fate of the Libyan-Tunisian union plan which was discussed in Jerba years ago or the attempts at a federation which were presented between Libya and Egypt, and Libya and Syria, and between the latter and the former, then disappeared.

At this point people possessing general information who are trying to lessen the wave of doubt of the ability of the union plans to survive assert that neither Algeria nor Tunisia rejects the principle of cooperation on this basis. Algeria is a country which favors union in its view of the Arab state of affairs, as is Tunisia, although each of them has a different view on the definition of the appropriate means for resolving disputes and then arriving at a framework for union.

The Arab minisummit plan which is aimed at dealing with the problem of the Sahara in order to arrive at a comprehensive Maghreb reconciliation continued to exist and be the subject of discussion and consultation after discussions at the bilateral summits between Morocco and Algeria and Algeria and Tunisia through the Libyan president.

Reports had anticipated that the minisummit to discuss the subject of the disputes would be held in the city of Fezo. The name of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was included in the list of countries which would take part in it.

Reports have circulated stating that the bilateral consultations which took place among the presidents of the Maghreb countries prior to the bilateral summit in Oujda attempted to reduce the obstacles in the way of the

minisummit and that the Libyan president discussed the subject in contacts he held after the Oujda summit, producing results that led one to understand that everyone was striving for a final settlement to the problems of the Sahara and the borders but preferred to let the solutions cook over a low flame, so that any meeting that took place on the summit level could occur on the basis of the sanctification of the results the efforts had achieved, out of anxiety over the possibility that meetings that have not been thoroughly studied might fail.

The Tunisian president, Habib Bourguiba, has a clear point of view on the subject of the unity of the countries of the Maghreb. He says:

"We believe that it is inevitable, sooner or later, that we will gradually proceed, along with our brothers, in the direction of organizing our common affairs in a formula which will be chosen by us, so that each country will not remain alone, isolated, with limited power and little influence in confronting foreign storms. People who are close are the most deserving of benefits, and we mean closeness in place, such as the countries of the Maghreb or the countries of the Gulf, for example. It might be easier for bonds of deep cooperation to be established among small groups, gradually proceeding in a broader framework which must in one way or another include all Arab countries. I direct an appeal to my brothers in the countries of the Maghreb to transcend the things that separate them and let the solidarity that brings their peoples together, not just through history but also toward the future, prevail in order to fashion the destiny which can only be a common one, by virtue of the interaction of interests among the countries of the Maghreb in all areas."

In a discussion which took place with him on the Magreb unity plan, the prime minister of Tunisia, Mr Mohamed Mzali, said "The building of the Maghreb is necessary as a reaction to the current international situation. Regional and quasi-regional groupings, in this era of ours, are now a vital necessity. It is necessary to provide the wherewithal to establish a harmonious geopolitical entity which can survive. It is obvious to believe that the establishment of bilateral cooperation is a preparatory step along the road to union, unity is a goal which requires patience and the pursuit of roads in stages, and necessity dictates that we stop where we are if we cannot advance. This stop will constitute a period which is necessary if life is to return to its normal course. Beware of doing anything under the pressure of anger which could make us regress. The unity of the Maghreb is a reality in people's hearts and it must gradually be given concrete form."

The question at issue is in reality a group of questions, the most important of which is the attempt to study the Moroccan-Libyan resolution in a thorough manner in order to ascertain its extent and its ability to endure, to study the true nature of the Algerian and Tunisian positions and the extent to which the countries of the Maghreb are prepared to proceed down the road of phased rapprochement, even if that is in isolation from formulas of unity, in this stage at least, then to ask about the means for settling the dispute on the

Sahara and the borders, the nature of relations and the interaction between this approach and the Egyptian-Sudanese one, then to get to the question on the extent to which plans for bringing the countries of Morocco together will be able to deal with regional and international forces which reject any form of unity, federation or even reconciliation among Arab countries.

A major Moroccan official replies that the people of the Maghreb, in particular the people of Morocco and Libya, will reply on the actual ground to the question that is circulating on the extent to which the unity plans can survive, while asserting and recognizing the magnitude of the strength of regional and international forces which will be harmed by formulas of unity, federation and reconciliation among Arab countries.

The answer to the questions bearing on the fate of efforts to settle the disputes and the possibilities for eliminating them will await the results of the Arab effort which has so far succeeded in persuading the parties in the Maghreb to open the doors to the search for possible, reasonable solutions, while also admitting that the road separating the desire for a settlement from the settlement itself is a long one.

The subject of dialogue with others, such as Egypt, the Sudan and so forth, is another one in which changes must occur before its fate is determined. These changes are more closely connected to an Arab summit than to the decisions a given Arab country might take.

Aside from the conclusions which all these issues might reach, the important thing is that the movement toward the search for solutions in the context of talk about a reconciliation or federation begin among the countries of the Maghreb, first of all, then among the remaining countries of the Arab group.

11887

CSO: 4504/443

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

ISRAELI PRESSURE TO ABANDON PIPELINE--Informed diplomatic sources have revealed to AL-MUSTAQBAL that Iraq and Jordan are trying to obtain "serious guarantees" against Israeli plans to block construction of a pipeline connecting the oil fields in western Iraq with the Jordanian Port of 'Aqabah on the Red Sea. These sources said that the Israeli government sent two envoys to Washington to try to persuade the American administration to abandon its support of the construction of this pipeline. Informed observers say that Israel is actually attempting to pressure Jordan, through America, in order to persuade Jordanian officials to "discuss" the subject of the pipeline with them, and to reach an "understanding" with them concerning it that would benefit Israel politically, and perhaps economically. Jordanian officials, however, have vigorously denied this; they have said that this is a matter between two Arab governments, and that the third party is America, not Israel. Iraqi and Jordanian officials are still fearful, however that Israel will put "difficulties and obstacles" in the way of the implementation of this project, which is expected to cost around a billion dollars. Iraq and Jordan would therefore like to obtain two kinds of American guarantees: first, official guarantees from the Reagan administration that it will prevent Israel from attacking the project, and second, guarantees from the main U.S. bank [as published], which is helping to finance this project, that Jordan and Iraq will not pay any money if Israel succeeds in blocking the project. Negotiations concerning this matter are ongoing. [Text] [Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 390, 11 Aug 84 pp 13-14] 9310

IRAQI OIL FOR LEBANON--Mr Victor Qasir, Minister of Industry and Oil, has proposed holding negotiations with Iraq to seek a price agreement on the crude oil necessary to operate the oil installation in Tripoli which resumed operations some two weeks ago. The Iraqi Petroleum Institute has affirmed to the ministry its readiness to deliver the oil CIF Tripoli at \$29.43 per barrel, the same price given to Turkey. This is in deference to the situation in Lebanon, but Lebanon has sent a delegation to Iraq to conclude a new agreement and an agreement on the remainder of the details. It is well known that the Tripoli refinery was supplied with Iraqi oil throughout 1983 at \$29.43 per barrel. This led to a crisis when the pipeline was closed due to an Iraqi-Syrian disagreement over revenues. It is also well known that the last agreement with Iraq, concluded in 1981, provided for the granting of financial aid to Lebanon as compensation for subsequent damages from transit revenues. [Text] [Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 390, 11 Aug 84 pp 48-49] 9310

CSO: 4404/648

FRENCH JOURNALIST ON CONDITIONS IN SOVIET ARMENIA

Beirut AZTAG in Armenian 30, 31 Aug 84

[Article by Thierry Tussard: "Soviet Armenia: Moscow Is Close, But...."]

[30 Aug 84 p 4]

[Text] An article bearing the above title was published in the 13 August issue of the French weekly newspaper LE POINT.

The following translation of this article about Soviet Armenia has been somewhat abridged.

It is pleasant to stroll on Lenin Square: the square is ringed by buildings faced in pink tuff stone, and everywhere one can see fountains and pools. This square is to Yerevan, the capital of Soviet Armenia, what Red Square is to Moscow. In short, a "Pink Square," depicting the sober, measured Marxist condition which prevails in the Armenian Republic. A closer examination, however, reveals that not everything is as rosy as one might think.

A quashed nationalism, a church controlled from without, a docile and obedient party, and a lame economy: these are the things which characterize "Red Armenia." In a manner of speaking, this is socialism in Caucasian colors.

Street names here are written first in Armenian, then in Russian. Aside from the Russian language, and on an equal status with the Georgian language, Armenian is the only language which is recognized by the Constitution. The two local TV channels, newspapers, and books give the illusion that we are far from the control of the Kremlin.

A young journalist by the name of Armen offers the following explanation: "So long as our nationalism is directed against Turkey, they allow us to express our feelings. Even in these conditions, however, there are certain limits." Almost 70 years after the massacres perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire, the rallying cry of the Armenian nation remains unchanged: "The Turk is the enemy."

This is the situation in Soviet Armenia, which presently comprises only one tenth of the territory of "Historical Armenia," with most of the remainder annexed to Turkey. Right after World War I, however, the Armenians were encouraged by the dreams of international solidarity of the League of Nations,

by acquiring an independent government (1918-1920). Under the combined onslaughts of Mustafa Kemal and Lenin, this independent republic gave ground; the Bolshevik Government took a handful of Armenian soil, before asking for the assistance... of the Red Army.

Alongside yesterday's Sovietization, today there is a persisting attempt at Russification. Marriages with Ukrainian girls, or girls of other nationalities, are encouraged. These women have the reputation of being less demanding than proud Armenian women. Some parents desire to send their children to Russian schools, because of the higher standards of the latter. And Armenian books are gradually becoming less common.

Our Lands

On 24 April 1965 patriotic older Armenians streamed out onto Yerevan's Lenin Square. There were also present that day large numbers of students, who had decided to pay due honor to the 50th anniversary of the massacre. One of the persons who was present recalls: "The square was blackened by a huge crowd; all of us were wearing black, as a symbol of mourning. 150,000 people were shouting in the streets: 'We want our lands from Turkey.' The Russians had never before seen the likes of it. We even pushed our way past the fence around the Opera House, because there were a number of government officials there stirring up the question of the Vietnam War, instead of talking about the Armenians. That day of 24 April became one of the most important events in the postwar period."

The first consequence of the day's events was that the top party regional official at the time was removed from office. And in order to avoid the repetition of such an incident, a monument in memory of the victims of the genocide was erected on one of the hills overlooking the city. This year 24 April, as every year, was honored by Armenians gathering in Yerevan from all over the world. Among the crowd one could not distinguish between Armenians who had arrived from Issy-les-Moulineaux, Antwerp, or San Francisco. A remarkable team of volunteer marshals ringed the quiet procession; soldiers were stationed at all entrances.

A person close to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Soviet Armenia states that "today it is impossible to have a demonstration similar to that of 24 April 1965." The secret police have gone to a great deal of effort to prevent the repetition of such a demonstration. The effort has been undertaken at two levels. First of all, the most activist Armenian nationalists have been arrested; second, censorship of news dealing with Armenian terrorist activities has been imposed. An inquisitive architect admits: "We know nothing about Armenian terrorist organizations except for what we obtain from Turkish TV, when it is possible to watch." Surprising and painful, but true....

On the other side of the coin, the government has made efforts to ensure that Armenian holidays coincide with Soviet ones, in order to assure a common focus of holiday celebration. For example, the official dedication of the "Mother Armenia" monument was held on the same day as the 50th anniversary of the

October Revolution, in 1967. The monument stands on the pedestal of the former Stalin Monument.

[31 Aug 84 p 4]

The Armenian Church

In its offensive aimed at settling the "national question" once and for all, the Soviet Government encounters obstacles which cannot be ignored -- the Armenian Apostolic Church and its Catholicos.

Above and beyond his religious functions, the Catholicos is the guardian of the purity of the Armenian language. Therefore to a certain degree Echmiadzin performs the function of the Vatican and Academie Francaise. It also functions as a central bank, from which money flowing in from the Diaspora is distributed. This represents a formidable triumvirate.

While some feel that the Catholicos is an able administrator and flexible diplomat, in the eyes of others he is a hostage in the hands of the government. The former assure us that "he has done a great deal for the Armenians"; the latter state that "he is doing what he can." Alluding to the age of the Catholicos, a young Armenian woman concludes this argument with the following personal judgment: "The older he gets, the braver he will become."

In any case, the Catholicos has a certain freedom of action. To have four parishes is very little for the 1-million population of Yerevan, but it is better than nothing. A clergyman with a magnificent beard explains: "We are permitted to sell candles and offer mass, but I am only the tenant of the land on which the church stands; I pay rent to the government." Members of the clergy must practice political forbearance: it is forbidden to preach nationalism even in the smallest way. It is forbidden to utter even a single word about the imprisoned members of the United National Party established in 1966. Nor can one express one's opinion in any manner or means concerning the Helsinki monitoring group, in spite of the fact that one of the members of that group, Rober Nazarian (arrested in December 1977), was a deacon. This is the law of forced silence being imposed upon the Armenian Church.

Does the Catholicos use subtle means to carry out his work, one might ask? In any case the authorities do not give the impression of being very dissatisfied with his activities. In 1976 Vazken I was even given a government decoration, while was it not Stalin who unhesitatingly had one of his predecessors slaughtered? Bearing a black silk cowl and cross, a picture of the Catholicos can be found in every home in Yerevan.

Karen Demirchian does not find himself in that same situation, although his name is respected in the same manner. But then, what party general secretary does not enjoy respect? Incidentally, in addition to respect, it would appear that Demirchian's fellow countrymen also regard him highly. Above all else they see him as an Armenian. A housewife from Yerevan's Arabkir district exclaims with delight: "Ah, our Demirchian, the youngest of all general secretaries."

Thanks to Karen Demirchian the smallest of the 15 Soviet republics has also remained the most homogeneous. Soviet Armenia remains that country in which

foreigners represent the smallest percentage: only 2.7 percent of Armenia's 3 million people are Russians. Therefore Armenians feel right at home here. Moscow is so far away (almost 2,000 kilometers) that the notion arises that everything is permitted here. One Hovhannes makes the derisive remark: "See..., Soviet soldiers." Because of their white skin, Russians here are dubbed "sokher" [onions]. But there are few soldiers for a republic situated on the border.

Veneration of Ararat

Today's Armenia is not the prosperous republic it could be. The people whisper that all riches: gold, copper, other metals, and other raw materials, go to Moscow. Frankly, without the help of Armenia's sister republics, Yerevan could not have a subway or nuclear center. There still exist, however, a number of elementary problems awaiting solution. Interruption of water service is common, impelling certain witty Armenians to say: "Lenin only promised soviets and electricity, not running water." One barely sets foot in a store to buy something when one is asked if one has anything to sell. This says something about the wealth of Yerevan. As for housing conditions, they are sometimes downright tragic.

Armenians from the Diaspora spend money in Armenia in innumerable ways, and in this manner to a certain degree they improve the life of all those whose only dream is Ararat.

The Yerevan Armenians truly worship Ararat, which is their magic mountain. They venerate it to the extent that they sometimes forget that by one dirty trick of history its summit is presently under the skies of Turkey. Nevertheless Ararat appears on the coat of arms of Soviet Armenia, to the great annoyance of Turkish officials. The Armenian poet Hovhannes Shiraz, directing his words to those Turks, said: "You have drawn a crescent on your flag, but there is a difference between you and us: you shall never have the moon, but we one day shall certainly regain Ararat."

8817

CSO: 4605/98

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

PRELATE PROTESTS IN WRITING CLOSURE OF ARMENIAN SCHOOLS

Tehran ALIK in Armenian 16 Sep 84 p 1

[Text] The Prelate of the Armenian Diocese of Tehran, Archbishop Ardak Manugian, has sent a letter to Prime Minister Mir Hosein Musavi in connection with the problems of Armenian schools. A translation of the letter appears below:

[Date] 13 September 1984 [Reference] 1833-311.

His Eminence Mir Hoseyn Musavi, the Honorable Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

We respectfully report:

In our letter to you, dated 5 September 1984 and referenced 1761-311, requesting the rectification and resolution of problems regarding Armenian schools, we had expressed our readiness to cooperate with any effort to find an acceptable and legitimate solution which would also conform with the principles of the Armenian Church, and we had hoped that measures would be taken to settle outstanding problems. Unfortunately, the Ministry of Education, by its Circular No. 12118-2 dated 8 September 1984, has instructed the Kushesh-Mariamian boys' middle school in Tehran's 11th educational district not to register any students for the coming school year.

The said circular, which in effect closes another Armenian school, raises the concern that perhaps the country's educational authorities have decided to dissolve more Armenian schools and in fact close all the schools of this minority. Such an act would not only reverse the traditions of the Armenian schools for the past few decades, but it would also contravene decrees and circulars issued by various educational authorities in the last few years and, in particular, it would run counter to Imam Khomeyni's instructions published in the 29 April 1980 (No. 10984) edition of KEYHAN--a copy of which is attached--and directly contradict Decree No. 10882 issued by Your Eminence on 23 June 1983, whereby you had established guidelines to define the status of minority schools, including Armenian schools, thus confirming the right of the minorities to have special schools.

In view of the problems enumerated above and the fact that the measures taken so far have not only failed to resolve the problems of the Armenian schools,

but have heightened the concerns of the Armenian community, we protest these measures and we request that the commission created by your instructions take steps to reopen the schools mentioned above and to expedite the implementation of its decision in these coming days so that the existing problems can be resolved in accordance with principles prescribed by the Armenian Church and that a legitimate and acceptable solution can be found to enable Armenian schools to resume their normal activities in the new school year.

Prayfully, Archbishop Ardak Manugian, Prelate of the Armenian Diocese of Tehran.

9588

CSO: 4605/14

TUNISIA

VARIOUS NATIONALIST, OPPOSITION GROUPS SPECULATE ON POLITICAL FUTURE

Free Unionists Discuss Regime

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 4, 28 Nov 83 pp 24-26

[Text] The Tunisian Movement of Free Unionists is a movement with a special composition in more than one context. It rules out political struggle as a means for realizing its objectives, relying on armed struggle first and last; it considers that the only way that can effect change lies in military conflict. In spite of the schism it has been experiencing for some time in its ranks, it rejects a regional perspective for its activity and insists that its role and its presence be on broad levels embracing three dimensions: the Maghreb dimension, the Arab nationalist dimension and the comprehensive Islamic dimension. One of the movement leaders happened to pass through the capital of Cyprus, Nicosia, and AL-NASHRAH seized this opportunity to hold a wide-ranging conversation with him, although the leaders of the opposition insisted that his name not be published "for political reasons related to the current conditions of the organization." We are publishing the conversation for preparatory purposes, in view of the new, particular concepts this movement involves, in the course of its struggle.

We asked the Tunisian opposition leader about the political situation in Tunisia and its probable developments, especially in light of the succession of Mr Mohamed Mzali, President Habib Bourguiba's prime minister, and he said,

"In Tunisia, a group of power centers are struggling with one another to take over. One can say that the shadow government is the centers of power in the Tunisian regime. For example, there is the wing of Mohamed Sayah, the former director of the party and founder of the party militia. There is the wing of the minister of the interior, Driss Guiga, and the wing of Habib Bourguiba's wife Wassila. The latter is the dominant wing, although it is still in the shadows. Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali, who has no influence or presence in these power centers, will go when Bourguiba goes. An incorrect Arab view is held, and a more incorrect bet is being made, concerning Mohamed Mzali, on the premise that he is the Bourguiba regime's alternative. Anyone who knows the situation in Tunisia realizes that Mzali has no popularity and has no strong wing within the authorities. He relies only on a

group of literary figures and writers. Therefore, betting on Mohamed Mzali is like betting on a pillow of straw."

[Question] However, it seems that Mzali is more open toward Arab causes and his positions on them have a nationalistic character. He is also trying to implant the liberal platform in Tunisia. Don't you consider that this is so?

[Answer] Mzali is working to gain time. There is no difference between him and Hedi Nour, but he is more outspoken about Arab nationalism, which is only a cover for his activity aimed at placating and satisfying some Arab countries (such as Libya, Syria and Iraq). Mohamed Mzali has been trying for some time to pull the rug out from under revolutionary and nationalistic organizations under nationalist premises. When he first started out, he actually managed to get the Libyan masses to turn toward him, but they later discovered what he was after. Isn't he the one who said, a little while ago, "The call for Arab unity is impetuous?"

[Question] Could you give us an idea about the Movement of Free Unionists organization, its emergence, its positions, and its method of operation?

[Answer] The Movement of Free Unionists is an organization whose establishment dates back to 1963 with the coup attempt against the Bourguiba regime. The organization had relations with the Arab Nationalist Movement, which Dr George Habash led. However, after the failure of the coup attempt, the organization went through a state of stagnation, in which we struggled to create and prepare the circumstances to re-emerge on various bases. The Movement of Free Unionists was re-established in 1980, and we relied on armed struggle as a sole method for struggling to eliminate the Bourguiba regime. We now have a strong organization in all Tunisian organizations and agencies. In the military institution itself, our situation is good. We do not consider ourselves to be political combatants so much as fighting men. Every combatant in the organization is a fighting man. We now have more than 2,000 fighting men in the Libyan jamahiriyyah, and we have secret military bases in Tunisia. We are now planning to move all our military staff into Tunisia. However, some problems that have arisen in the organization continue to obstruct this sort of step.

[Question] What are these problems?

[Answer] I do not consider it a secret that difficult circumstances are now passing over us. A dispute occurred in the ranks of the organization concerning the position on the "revolutionary upheaval" in the FATAH movement. There is a group that demands that Yasir 'Arafat be supported and a group that calls for the upheaval to be supported. A schism occurred on that basis in the organization, and the people who split off called themselves the "Movement of Socialist Unionists."

[Question] What tendency do you side with?

[Answer] With the revolutionary upheaval.

[Question] Are those who split off numerous?

[Answer] Yes, to an extent. Part of the leadership staff and the base split off and some people who had been fighting in the ranks of the Popular Front General Command joined Yasir 'Arafat. The schism penetrated to the body of the organization in Tunisia, where some people sided with Yasir 'Arafat; these people thus rally around the regime, which supports Yasir 'Arafat. However, we still have hopes that the rift will be repaired and solidarity will be restored to the ranks of the organization.

[Question] Aren't there other political conflicts which resulted in the outbreak of the schism? What hopes do you have for solidarity to be restored to the organization?

[Answer] Discussions are now underway concerning the return of the people who broke away. To this end, they asked us to exercise self-criticism on a group of issues. They hold us responsible for the failure which has afflicted the organization on the Libyan stage. They also demand, on grounds that we are a nationalist organization, that we stand alongside Iraq in its war against Iran, since they say that the war is between two forms of nationalism, Arab and Persian nationalism, and that the Arabs must fight alongside Iraq. They have asked some fighting men from the organization to go to the Iraqi front. A group of organization members who were present in France actually did go to the Iraqi front.

[Question] Does the organization have an influential presence on the Tunisian stage? Is it a purely Tunisian organization?

[Answer] Yes, we have a strong presence. We are not regional. We are fighting for the sake of freedom, unity and socialism and have a national following and a number of Arab nationalities in the organization and in its leadership. However, our basic mission now is to bring down the Tunisian regime. If there is fighting in the Arab nation, we will fight alongside the nationalist and revolutionary forces, just as we fought al-Sadat through the jamahiriyah. We are ready to fight the Americans to defend the Libyan revolution. We still have fighting men in the Palestinian revolution, since we consider that the Palestinian cause is the central Arab cause.

[Question] As regards armed struggle, is that an absolute option? Do you not believe in political action?

[Answer] Armed struggle is the absolute option. We do not believe in other means of political change in the Arab nation. Regimes which came in and rode on the shoulders of the masses by force must be eliminated by force, and they can be eliminated only by revolutionary force, revolutionary violence. In Tunisia, the Tunisian people will stand by our side when we start to fight the regime. Our people no longer believe in purely political action, because that is bickering.

[Question] Therefore you agree with organizations that propound "revolutionary violence" and engage in acts of liquidation and individual political assassinations.

[Answer] Yes, we agree with these forces, especially FATAH -- the Revolutionary Council, and consider that what they engage in is correct. We believe in chasing down and striking imperialism everywhere, especially in the Arab nation. As for what you have described as individual assassinations, we are in favor of them, because they are the only way to liquidate traitors and they help provide an impetus and motive force for the Arab man in the street, while they at the same time are a warning to all other traitors to try to correct their positions. It is necessary to eliminate and destroy the symbols of treason, because they pose an obstacle to the masses. I will not keep it secret from you that we have a program that has been approved in order to liquidate symbols of treason, and we will start on it soon. The traitors and agents must be liquidated because they undermine revolutions.

[Question] Therefore you support the Armenian Secret Army. Do you find that its military practices are sound?

[Answer] Yes, we support it and we consider that what it is doing on behalf of the just Armenian cause is sound.

[Question] Does your movement have relations with armed Armenian organizations?

[Answer] We do. We are trying to develop them. We are trying to benefit from their experiences, as they will benefit from ours.

[Question] Have you participated in military actions against the Tunisian regime yet?

[Answer] Yes, in the Gafsa events. The fact is that we were not the only ones to take part in that. I would like to tell you something; the purpose behind what happened in Gafsa was not to do away with Habib Bourguiba's regime. Not at all. Its purpose was to do away with the prime minister, Hedi Nouira. If the target in this had been Bourguiba, he would have been reached, since at that time he was in Nafta, which is not very far from Gafsa.

[Question] Do you have relations with the Arab countries?

[Answer] No, we are a revolutionary organization and our relations are with Arab revolutionary organizations and movements.

[Question] With the jamahiriyah, for example?

[Answer] We have relations because we believe that the jamahiriyah is in the Arab progressive camp.

[Question] And Syria, for example?

[Answer] We have some activities which do not meet with opposition from the Syrians.

[Question] And Iraq?

[Answer] We have no relations with Iraq.

[Question] With the forces of the Tunisian and Maghreb opposition in general?

[Answer] We are fighting to form a national front for the liberation of the Maghreb (Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco). This front will be a nationalist party, organization and force but it will not be closed to other national and progressive opposition forces in the future. Now, however, preparation is being made for this front to be established out of nationalist parties and organizations in the three countries.

[Question] Do you take a negative position on the Algerian regime?

[Answer] We consider that the Algerian regime is a reactionary regional regime working against Arab national and revolutionary forces. There is a security agreement between the Tunisian regime and the Algerian regime on the basis of which fighting people are exchanged. We have more than 15 fighting men under detention in Algerian prisons. We also consider that it is necessary to establish a regime which will correct the course of the Algerian revolution, which has deviated greatly. In this context, we are in agreement with Ben Bella concerning borders, where the notion of the Islamic nation does not conflict with the presence of the Arab nation. The unification of the Islamic nation will not come about by bypassing the unity of the Arab nation.

[Question] How do you evaluate the situation in Morocco?

[Answer] Morocco is a reactionary fascist regime that has been exposed. It is an ally of imperialism, and we have relations with Moroccan revolutionary and nationalistic forces such as the Socialist Union of Popular Forces and the Revolutionary Option. As I told you, the national front which will fight for the sake of the liberation and unity of the Maghreb will include the Revolutionary Option.

[Question] Could you give us an idea of the movement's ideology?

[Answer] The ideology of the Movement of Free Unionists is the notion of Arab revolution. That is, we are Nasirists.

[Question] Do you have relations with the Lebanese Nasirist forces?

[Answer] Yes, we have relations with the al-Murabitun and a strategic alliance with the Arab Socialist Federation under the leadership of 'Abd-al-Rahim Tarad.

[Question] How would you describe the regime you will establish in Tunisia?

[Answer] It is a nationalist, patriotic, progressive revolutionary regime, an alternative to Bourguiba.

Movement's Anti-Algerian Stance

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 9, 23 Jan 84 pp 14, 15

[Text] The meeting with an official of the Tunisian Movement of Free Unionists which was published in the fourth issue of AL-NASHRAH stirred up a number of questions concerning this movement, its nature, its goals and its orientations, especially since it propounds the notion of armed conflict as a method of practical struggle, and in addition is a new organization which does not seem to be very well known, even with some political forces which maintain followup.

Through information which has been made available to it (especially since the movement does not issue organized literature) and through a dialogue which has been held with one of its most prominent symbols, Zouhir Chaffai, who occupies the position of chairman of the political department there, AL-NASHRAH is trying here to offer further clarification on this movement so that the meeting in the fourth issue will not continue to be an abstraction or a passing journalistic event.

Establishment and Structural Goals

The Movement of Free Unionists was established in Tunisia in 1980, based on the notion of Arab revolution as embodied in the ideas propounded by the Egyptian president Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir and the charter, on grounds that Tunisia does not have any characteristics which would exclude it from this notion.

In this context, the movement raises the watchword of "socialism," which it interprets as equality, justice, equality of opportunities and welfare. All these matters, in its view, are in contradiction with the presence of the bourgeoisie.

The movement's charter, which is unpublished, states that it is an organization fighting for the sake of the goals of the Tunisian Arab people in order to create true change which will guarantee the establishment of an alternative nationalist progressive democratic regime. Therefore the charter adds that the pillar of the movement is composed of workers, peasants, professional soldiers, intellectuals, students and organizations of a unionist, occupational and cultural character, in addition to all unificationist progressive national elements.

The goals of the movement are subsumed under a number of major categories, first of which are the tasks in the national context (in Tunisia). These include the struggle to bring down Bourguiba's regime, raise the level of the masses and work constantly to establish a unified revolutionary political organization. There is the nature of the Palestinian cause as a central cause for the Arab nation. The third category of the movement's main missions is connected with the international situation.

Concerning the movement's organizational situation, he points out that its leader comes from a central committee which elects the political bureau, and

this in turn elects the secretary general, whose identity is now secret because he is living inside the country.

The central committee is elected by the base. The movement has a conference which meets every 5 years. The first conference was held in 1980. The movement has no central newspaper, but it depends on bulletins and declarations to express its viewpoint.

A Conversation and Political Positions

To round out the picture, as we said at the beginning, AL-NASHRAH held this conversation with one of the movement's leaders, Zouhir Chaffai, the chairman of the political department and the top official after the secretary general of the movement. It is worth pointing out that this conversation took place before 'Arafat's visit to Cairo and the recent events in Tunisia.

AL-NASHRAH: Let us start with the movement's relationships. What is your position on forces and organizations inside Tunisia? Do you have relations with them?

Chaffai: The movement has a position on the [legally] declared parties in Tunisia. These organizations are to be considered an integral part of the regime. It is a game under the cover of democracy and the presence of a number of parties, in order to pull the rug out from under the revolutionary forces which are working for radical change. These declared organizations are a fabrication, a game, and we are against games and fabrications. The Tunisian people are also aware of the danger of this game.

AL-NASHRAH: Is it possible to make a more precise statement? Is it possible to clarify this position of yours further?

Chaffai: Let us take for example the Movement of Democratic Socialism, whose secretary general is Ahmed Mestiri, who when he was minister engaged in a form of terror that France did not engage in at the time of the occupation.

The Communist Party, in our view, is an integral part of the French Communist Party. It was the first to stand against the independence of Tunisia and say that Tunisia did not have the wherewithal to be an independent country.

The Popular Unity Movement -- Provisional Body, Belhadj Amor, was recently permitted to engage in political action openly. This movement split off to form a movement inside Tunisia, supported by the Tunisian regime, to paralyze the Popular Movement under the chairmanship of the fighting man Ahmed Ben Salah, who is now living abroad.

AL-NASHRAH: Therefore you do not have relations with Tunisian forces?

Chaffai: Our relations are with secret forces such as the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Tunisia.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the secret marxist organizations?

Chaffai: The movement has no relations with them, but we take no positions concerning them. Indeed, we try to meet with them, especially the organizations al-Shu'lah and al-Haqiqah.

AL-NASHRAH: What is your notion, then, of organizational activity in Tunisia?

Chaffai: We believe that there should be a number of parties which have arisen from the Tunisian people and their decisions. We have no idea of establishing a front of national salvation which will accept minimal conditions. Rather, we have a basic condition for such a front, which is the adoption of armed conflict. We do not consider any method other than this to be appropriate for establishing a revolutionary democratic progressive national patriotic regime. This front should work for the sake of advancing the revolution which will be responded to by a plebiscite by which the Tunisian people will determine the system they want. In our opinion armed struggle does not mean leaping up and taking power by force.

AL-NASHRAH: Do you now have relations with Tunisian religious forces?

Chaffai: Relations with them exist, on grounds that they take part in Tunisian political life. However, these forces have not embraced armed conflict.

AL-NASHRAH: But they did participate in the armed events of Gafsa.

Chaffai: They did not. We are now working to persuade this current to embrace armed conflict; this current has its weight and its mass following.

Our condition for establishing a strategic relationship is that the organizations with which these relations are established must embrace armed conflict. However, tactically, it is possible just to establish political relations among forces and parties.

AL-NASHRAH: What about Morocco?

Chaffai: As far as Morocco goes, there are revolutionary forces with which we are linked, such as the Union of Popular Forces, the Revolutionary Option and the 20 March Organization.

As far as Algeria goes, we categorize the Algerian regime as reactionary and rotten. It has conspired against the Algerian people and has conspired against the revolution. We consider that Houari Boumediene's coup was a coup against Arabhood and Arab unity. Therefore we have relations with the Algerian opposition forces, headed by Ahmed Ben Bella.

AL-NASHRAH: While we are on the subject of the Maghreb, how would you evaluate the Sahara question?

Chaffai: We are on the side of Polisario as a revolutionary focal point from which all Maghreb revolutionary forces for the liberation of the Maghreb set forth, but we ourselves are against it as a separate country.

AL-NASHRAH: You propound the issue of unity and the Palestinian cause as central focal points. How do you explain this point of view?

Chaffai: One can liberate the Arab nation and realize Arab unity only by liberating Palestine. It is possible to liberate Palestine only by liberating the Arab nation.

AL-NASHRAH: But how can one bring this unity about?

Chaffai: One can bring it about only by revolution and armed struggle.

AL-NASHRAH: Is this a unity which will be realized in steps (the Maghreb first of all, for example)?

Chaffai: No, reaction endorses this notion and it is fraudulence, aimed at gaining time and engaging in falsification.

AL-NASHRAH: Does the movement have people in prison?

Chaffai: We have close to 100 persons in prison in Tunisia and 15 in Algeria.

AL-NASHRAH: Are you working on behalf of their release?

Chaffai: We have sent Algeria a warning to release them and all the Tunisian prisoners it has, or else we will turn to strike out at all Algerian interests in the world. This threat has been in effect since the start of 1984.

AL-NASHRAH: Have you previously conducted any armed operations?

Chaffai: We have conducted large operations which we do not want to mention because we are concerned about our personnel. (He mentioned some of them in detail, demanding that that not be published.)

AL-NASHRAH: What about your participation in the Gafsa events?

Chaffai: The people who took part in that belonged to the nationalist current in general, not to a specific current. However, the person who led the operation was the late Ezzedine Cherif of the Movement of Free Unionists.

AL-NASHRAH: Let us go back to the subject of the Palestinian cause. In the interview held with your organization previously, it was mentioned that the disputes within the FATAH movement had their effect on you, since a schism occurred in the movement. However, doesn't that seem strange, especially since you are geographically remote from the effects of this dispute?

Chaffai: The FATAH crisis should be considered at the heart of the revolutionary movement of the Arab nation. It is not a particular crisis. Therefore, it has left effects on us, because we do not consider it isolated from our organization, since we are a resistance force in the Arab nation.

AL-NASHRAH: But why all this enthusiasm over the reform current inside FATAH?

Chaffai: Because the uprising came about as a response to the deviant platform by which 'Arafat had proceeded, in alienation from the PLO, in violation of its bylaws and its political program, and it constituted a waste of our Arab people's sacrifices and a threat to their national cause. 'Arafat acted on an individual basis without referring to the central committee and the revolutionary and progressive forces which are strategically allied with the PLO, by carrying out a group of political decisions which constituted an alternative to the laws of the struggle against the enemy.

AL-NASHRAH: However, hasn't the presence of the resistance in Tunisia had its effects on the political movement in the country?

Chaffai: It has, but the Tunisian regime has exploited its presence to serve itself by underlining the negative image of the actions of some of them.

AL-NASHRAH: Are you in contact with the Palestinian bases in Tunisia?

Chaffai: We have connections, also, but the regime has tightened the blockade around them and it is now out of the question to get in touch with them. Therefore we consider that they have been imprisoned by the Tunisian regime and we will work to release them by force.

AL-NASHRAH: Have you tried to influence any of these bases?

Chaffai: Yes, but the Tunisian regime, in coordination with the Yemeni leadership, is putting pressure on the fighting men to stay in Tunisia and not to join the uprising. We will take the measure of striking out at the interests of the Tunisian regime domestically and abroad in order to liberate these imprisoned persons. The priorities in our demands will be to liberate the Palestinian fighting men, bring them back into the arena of conflict and attach them to the new movement, which is not just in FATAH but also in the Arab nation itself.

AL-NASHRAH: In conclusion, is anything practical being done in this regard?

Chaffai: We have finished setting out an integrated program for carrying out operations, if the regime does not respond to the Palestinian combatants' desire to get out and join the ranks of the revolution. The regime is retaining their travel documents, it is difficult for them to move and they have no place but Algeria, which we consider is not in conflict with the Tunisian regime, especially since security agreements exist between the two regimes. However, there have been rebellions in the Palestinian camps, and the Tunisian regime has assassinated a number of people who tried to escape.

Leftist Describes Coup Attempts

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 10, 30 Jan 84 pp 26, 27

[Text] The events which came to the surface in January, to whose emergence we have become accustomed from time to time and which have transformed the image portrayed in people's minds about "green Tunisia" to the Tunisia of "bloodbaths," conflicts and campaigns of repression, have [illegible].

We have left the latest events for discussion elsewhere and have gone back many years, very many years, about 20 years and a little more, in order to open the Tunisian wound from one of its unknown angles, which has not been written about much -- what was written at the time being only transitory and surrounded by much obscurity, to a point where it appears unknown or ignored.

That was in the final days of 1982, when the news agencies and papers, in addition to Radio Tunisia, announced the discovery of a "plot" to overthrow the regime of the Tunisian president, Habib Bourguiba. This was followed by campaigns of arrest, trials, executions, and lengthy prison terms, which were subsequently accompanied by a period of long silence, since after that no one talked about this event and the wound was closed for many long years.

AL-NASHRAH met in an Arab capital with one of the leaders of the "coup conspiracy" movement, Mr Mostari Ben Said, the only person under the death penalty to have been spared. It held an interview with him on reminiscences which brought us back to those and later days. He talked about many details about which secrecy has been maintained up to now. It is worth pointing out that Mostari Ben Said, who in this conversation is taking us back to an unexplored jungle of our history, is the same person who nominated himself for the elections for the Tunisian presidency in 1975, the year in which Habib Bourguiba declared that he was being elected president of Tunisia for life!

"The face of the Tunisian national movement took concrete form in the Tunisian Destourian Party, the framework for political action in the late twenties and early thirties. In its orientations, it was an Arab Islamic party, since the people of the Maghreb did not differentiate between Islam and Arabhood. It had influence and strength among the Tunisian people, as it was one aspect of the struggle against colonialism." Mostari Ben Said went on "In the face of this situation, French colonialism tried to penetrate the party by means of persons who had studied in France and had embraced its culture, having become advocates of Western culture. Indeed, a group of these people, such as Habib Bourguiba and Mahmoud Materi, managed to split the party in 1932, with the appearance of the executive committee's organization, led by the traditional approach of the Destourian Party, Abdelaziz Taalbi and Mohieddine Klibi, and the organization of the Political Bureau which Bourguiba and Materi led, supported by the occupation forces and consisting of persons who were Western in culture, which managed to penetrate among the people. This situation lasted until World War Two."

Mr Mostari Ben Said continued, "In the course of this war, the Destourian Party, Political Bureau, faced a new schism. One party to it stood alongside the axis countries, working for the expulsion of French colonialism and Tunisian independence. Its most prominent figures included Ibrahim Tobbal, Habib Thameur and Hedi Chaker. The second tendency, the Neodestourian Party, stood alongside the allies and maintained its ties with France; its figures included Habib Bourguiba, Salah Ben Youssef and Ahmed Ben Salah. Since that date, this orientation began to deepen its relations with the United States, since the American ambassador mediated in order to have Bourguiba given permission to come to Tunisia.

"At the end of the war, with France's rejection of independence for Tunisia, the group which had been under the aegis of the axis countries enjoyed broad popular support, while the Neodestourian Party conducted negotiations with France through its secretary general, Salah Ben Youssef. Gradually, Bourguiba's status with the colonialists started to grow strong. In 1956 Bey Habib Bourguiba was assigned to form the Tunisian cabinet. Two ministers who were Tunisian Jews, Albert Bessis for agriculture and Andre Barouch for finance, joined this cabinet of his; they both have children in Israel.

"The special relations which Habib Bourguiba had established with the French colonial authorities left behind broad disputes in the ranks of the Neodestourian Party, since Habib Bourguiba and a group of his cronies stood against the leaders and basic staff of the party, headed by Salah Ben Youssef, who had rejected the agreements that had been reached by Habib Bourguiba and the French colonialists. They declared their hostility openly and a new rift appeared in the party, between Ben Youssef's secretariat general and Bourguiba's Political Bureau. Bourguiba's regime managed to inflict a great blow on the party by assassinating the secretary general, Salah Ben Youssef, in 1961." Mostari Ben Said continued, "It was in the context of this struggle that our movement appeared, although it was not linked by any ties to the movement of the Youssefists which had arisen in the country at that time."

What, now, about the movement: how was it formed, what did it want, and what was its fate? These questions were the locus of the second conversation AL-NASHRAH held with Mostari Ben Said.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the 1962 movement?

Ben Said: The 1962 movement should basically be considered an extension of the student movement "Voice of the Tunisian Student" which was established in 1947 with the goal of realizing educational and religious reforms. This orientation basically was hostile to French colonialism and French culture, which the colonialists had tried to implant in Tunisia.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the 73 Movement program?

Ben Said: The movement did not have a recognized political program or specific ideology, since there were no parties or political organizations with such a definition at that time. Rather, what brought the people who had enrolled in the framework of the movement together was nothing more than enmity to Habib Bourguiba, whom the French had appointed to the peak of power in Tunisia and who then enjoyed the blessing of the West, especially the United States. Therefore the goals of the movement were no more than:

Bringing down Habib Bourguiba.

Establishing a progressive unionist Arab regime.

AL-NASHRAH: What form did the movement rely on in its action?

Ben Said: Basically, the movement consisted of a group of military people and civilians with a nationalist orientation who had become organized in the framework of the Movement of Free Unionists and believed in holding a coup d'etat. Therefore, it is not strange that we should rely directly on the army in order to do away with the regime.

AL-NASHRAH: Could you point the movement's most important military and civilian figures out to us?

Ben Said: There were many figures in our movement who were in the military sector and also civilians, including Kebir Mehrazi, officer in the army and chief of the Republican Guard, Sadok Ben Said, Ben Biali and Lazhar Chreidi, the commander of the armed struggle against the French in Tunisia, all of whom were military figures; among the civilians there were Abdelaziz Akremi, Habib Hanafi, Rahmouni, me and others.

AL-NASHRAH: Did your movement have connections with Tunisian nationalist parties or Arab parties?

Ben Said: On the one hand we did not have a direct relationship with the parties in Tunisia in the specific sense, since our party was essentially aimed at making a coup and required a great deal of secrecy. On the other hand, at that time no broad ties existed with the Arab East. All that existed was that we had ties with some symbols of the Algerian revolution by virtue of the Maghreb's common struggle, especially that of the Algerian and Tunisian people, against French colonialism; in the course of these contacts we managed to obtain some weapons from the Algerian revolution. We enjoyed sympathy from Egypt, and these bonds were exploited in the course of the trials of the symbols of the movement which took place openly and were broadcast by Radio Tunisia. We were accused of high treason on the charge of "getting in touch with a foreign country." Relations between Bourguiba's regime and Egypt and Algeria grew tense after the movement was discovered, and the executions and prison sentences which followed that.

AL-NASHRAH: How did the regime manage to discover your movement?

Ben Said: We were finishing up preparations for our movement when some personnel connected to Bourguiba's regime infiltrated the movement and worked to expose it. This style characterized Bourguiba's regime, through the "infiltration policy" he pursued with the forces in opposition to the regime -- exactly the same policy which the French colonial policy and its instruments had applied in dealing with the Tunisian national movement. This is one aspect. The other is an external element which may be explained by the reason that a large part of the movement's personnel were in Libya.

What is noteworthy is that the members who were connected to the regime inside our movement did not escape the death penalty; rather, they were hanged alongside the movement members who had been sentenced to death. Bourguiba's regime stands apart from all the regimes in the Arab region in terms of this approach.

AL-NASHRAH: What results occurred following the discovery of the movement?

[Answer] At the beginning, 26 members of the movement were imprisoned and the existence of the movement's radio and some weapons was discovered. A new wave of arrests was then launched which included about 400 members and friends of the movement. Then the trials began in military court in Tunis, the capital. The trials were broadcast directly over the radio and the Tunisian people then discovered the truth about Bourguiba's approach through the presence of readymade verdicts which were known in advance.

One of the results of these trials was that death penalties were handed down against 12 movement members who were Tunisian nationalist military figures and civilians, while most of the imprisoned persons were given sentences ranging from life to 20 years. However, after 10 years in prison most of them were released, in 1972.

After the movement's plan was discovered, the trials began and I was sentenced to death, I was forced to escape from Tunisia to Algeria, where I spent many years working in the ranks of the opposition. However, we were not graced with success, due to various circumstances, some related to the opposition and its figures and others related to the circumstances surrounding combative and nationalist activity.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the movement after that?

Ben Said: Our movement was subjected to a great loss in 1962 and the personnel who survived proceeded to work in great secrecy under the name of the Free Unionists until the new organizations appeared in the form in which they now exist. The movement was discovered just 5 months after its establishment. In spite of this short life, it managed to expand rapidly, especially because of the increasing resentment.

AL-NASHRAH: Did you work for union with Algeria?

Ben Said: No, we did not have any ideas in this regard, because there were no borders between us and Algeria or any of the countries of the Maghreb in 1962. We were a single people and a single country. For example, there were 300,000 Algerian families in Tunisia. Any citizen of the Maghreb could move easily and smoothly from any region to another by virtue of his identity card and nothing more.

Our concerns in the Maghreb at that time were dominated by two basic ideas, first, Arab liberation and second, Arab union. Therefore, there was no concern about creating a special bloc for the Maghreb.

AL-NASHRAH: Finally, did the movement take a specific position on the Palestinian cause?

[Answer] Here I would like to state that some members of the movement took part in the 1948 war in Palestine, and we had groups that participated in the army of salvation experiment which Fawzi al-Qawuqji headed. This issue had presented our movement with a position on the Palestinian cause. As I pointed out, the notion of Arab liberation, and the notion of the liberation of Palestine as part of it, were one of our driving forces in the movement.

Nationalist Describes Government Repression

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 11, 6 Feb 84 pp 22, 23

[Text] Last 26 January the Tunisian authorities proceeded to arrest the secretary general of the Arab Nationalist Grouping Movement in Tunisia, Mr Bechir Essid, after he had faced an unsuccessful assassination attempt during the bread riot demonstrations.

Bechir Essid, 2 days before the riots, had given an interview to AL-NASHRAH which was outstripped by events and it was not possible to publish it. At that time we asked our correspondent in Tunisia to return to Mr Essid to complete the conversation by asking him about the new developments which the "bread riots" had underscored. However, it appears that the security authorities were swifter than AL-NASHRAH's correspondent, since they arrested Essid before our correspondent could meet with him.

In light of this, we found it preferable to publish the conversation in our possession as it is. It is in effect a document which derives added importance from the fact that the person who held it is now in prison.

From the International Judiciary Institute in Lebanon, to membership in the Tunisian judiciary, and establishment of the Society of Young Tunisian Judges, then work as a lawyer with the court of prosecution (the court of cassation) and the administrative court, crowning his efforts to defend political cases, and then to establishment of the Arab Nationalist Grouping Movement -- the crowning touch, when we take the general political climate in Tunisia into account and also view the historic, hard and sometimes bloody relationship which has existed between the regime and some Tunisian pan-Arab currents.

If we contemplate the nature of the definition of the Tunisian government itself, which equates the government with nationalism, that is, states that the Tunisian government, by this definition, is the equivalent of Tunisian nationalism, though not even the Tunisian constitution points to such a national affiliation:

If we look at all this, we will be able to realize the extent of the seriousness of the movement which Bechir Essid proclaimed for the first time, and we will also be able to realize why it is a crowning touch.

Here is the text of the conversation with Essid regarding the grouping, the circumstances of its establishment and its present situation:

AL-NASHRAH: How did the notion of establishing this movement begin, and under what circumstances?

Essid: Because the Tunisian stage was subjected to harassment and persecution for more than a quarter century. This harassment can tighten or ease up, but it is always there. In brief, the national movement has been attacked whenever it tried to appear on the stage as a political current which sought to take part in national events and issues since the era of

colonialism. Its condition, in this regard, did not change even after independence, although the nationalist current has struck deep roots in the national and mass contexts because of civilization, history and geographical location and is consequently founded on a firm legitimate basis. Therefore the confrontations between the regime and the Arab nationalists in Tunisia in previous periods were severe. The fact is that in addition to these factors, there have been mistakes on the part of the nationalists themselves, since they lacked coordination, failed to mend rifts and did not have a clear vision and consequently did not reach the level of organization in a political movement which would be representative of them and demand that their aspirations be realized. Therefore, the necessity of establishing the Arab Nationalist Grouping, which has been the first national progressive organizational framework in the nation of Tunisia since the early eighties, arose.

AL-NASHRAH: Why did this organization fail to emerge until the eighties, when we realize that the Arab identity of the countries of the Maghreb began, historically, in Tunisia? I might for example mention al-Qayrawan in past centuries and the al-Zaytuniyah University, which has been a citadel of knowledge and nationalism, in modern history.

Essid: For numerous reasons which it would take a long time to explain, including the severity and harshness of the pressure brought to bear on nationalists and the special forms which the blockade around the nation of Tunisia has taken, as well as conditions in the Arab nation in general, because Tunisia is influential, and is susceptible to influence. Moreover, a proper birth for such a cause in this state of affairs is always difficult.

AL-NASHRAH: Am I to understand that the gestation period before this movement came to the political surface took a long time?

Essid: Indeed it did, and you should not be amazed at that, since it is not easy to politicize nationalists in Tunisia and organize them in a political movement. There even is great confusion there among some nationalists between the general affiliation, that is, as part of an Arab identity, intellectual and cultural affiliation, and finally, which is important, actual commitment to a political movement for the sake of carrying out organized activity.

AL-NASHRAH: What moment are you expressing?

Essid: A moment which will come.

AL-NASHRAH: We observe that the nationalists are now numerous, and at the same time we note that their form of political and organizational self-expression is not in keeping with their true magnitude. How do you explain this blatant contradiction between the nationalist man in the street and his political and organizational reputation, which speaks for him?

Essid: The answer in my view is clear. That is the absence of organization and the erroneous notion which considers that the nationalist orientation is just carrying around ideas and reading books, while this has no meaning if

it is not transformed into objective political activity within a specific organization.

AL-NASHRAH: Don't you consider that this fragmentation and splintering can be attributed to the severity of the struggle which took place between the regime and certain nationalist parties at various periods?

Essid: In my belief, the main reason lies with the nationalists who did not organize in the past within a single political movement. This is an essential element which I believe applies to the Tunisian nation and can be ascribed to the Arab nation as a whole. The problem of the nationalists, whatever they might be, is that most of them evade organization and commitment, which is a flagrant error. Therefore they will continue to be outside of events, unless they resolve this problem. Therefore I direct my appeal to our brother nationalists in Tunisia to organize; there is no nationalism without organization and no nationalist without an organizational affiliation. Merely talking about nationalism as a phenomenon has been overdone, as a rhetorical declarative argument which has absolutely no meaning and consecrates the rhetorical nature of Arab thought, since every idea must have political action which will give it a place in history. Therefore historical political action which will be an objective achievement is required. Of course we must not ignore, on the other hand, ideological composition and mobilization and reliance on knowledge, but none of this will be of value if it is not transformed into political action.

AL-NASHRAH: What is your position on this sudden rapprochement which the Maghreb area has been experiencing?

Essid: As part of the policy of regional fragmentation, the governments in the region have started to talk about the Maghreb after a mutual alienation that has lasted more than a quarter century. It is as if they have forgotten, or pretended to forget, the Tangiers charter, the Jerba statement and all previous attempts at Arab unity. The question that arises now is, hasn't there been a development since this period, since we find these governments speaking the same language that prevailed a quarter century ago? As far as we are concerned, we do not rely on governments with respect to such basic issues as that of unity, although we bless the rapprochement among Arab countries since that is the weakest permissible form of faith, since these governments still insist on surrounding dealings on rapprochement with secrecy among themselves, and we as a people and as opposition political forces do not know the truth of what is going on among them. This means that they are still insisting on following an undemocratic policy, and real union cannot be realized in the Maghreb or the East if the roles of all the political powers and the participation by the masses of the people are not made more accessible, because the only sound road must pass via the process of the democracy of the people, and this current must be based on a socialist foundation; therefore, this recent rapprochement has come from above and it lacks a base among the people which will protect it.

AL-NASHRAH: Let us move over to the economic causes that have prompted this rapprochement. The report of the Club of Rome and other economic reports issued by international institutions state that this region is on the verge of a critical economic stage. What do you say on this subject?

Essid: We have become accustomed to having Arab governments, including of course the governments of the Maghreb, become hostile and make peace with one another with the same impulsiveness and the same elan. This time it appears that one of the reasons for the rapprochement is that each of the governments in the region is suffering from some crisis and looking for support from a neighbor, if only on a haphazard, tentative basis.

AL-NASHRAH: Two political movements were recognized recently, in the context of government liberalization. What does this mean as far as you are concerned?

Essid: In this regard I would like to summarize three points as far as our movement goes:

1. We support pluralism, on grounds that it is a right of every national current, a right to exist and a right to be active. We are striving to strengthen our relations with each force in the Tunisian national opposition.
2. We consider that the legitimacy of our movement exists and is derived from the people and from the masses' struggle, and we are continuing with our activity without letup, whether the authorities acknowledge that or not, because the legitimacy of our movement exists.
3. Pluralism will remain meaningless as long as it is based on a selection process carried out by the regime, which recognizes some movements and ignores others as its interests require, because democracy is an integral whole which everyone must possess. It is not a gift or grant which is given to some people and others are deprived of. The situation is that all are equal in terms of citizenship. The mere pursuit of the process of choosing and selecting makes pluralism lose its meaning completely, and it becomes just a formal maneuver which is aimed at strengthening the ruling regime.

AL-NASHRAH: What has your movement gained from this liberal climate?

Essid: The situation is still as it is; we have received nothing from this liberalization and the call for pluralism which they are constantly talking about. In fact, the authorities' blockade around us has tightened up in every respect, and their prosecution of us has increased in the course of it. They still insist on preventing us from issuing our newspaper AL-NIDA' AL-'ARABI, which we want to have as the organ of the Arab Nationalist Grouping Movement, though the regime has permitted other movements to issue papers speaking in their name, and we are now being subject to intensified pressures and surveillance.

In addition, the authorities still insist on depriving us of the simplest right, which is the right to move around. For example, I am prohibited from travelling outside the country and my passport was confiscated a long time ago, in spite of the requests from national and democratic forces in Tunisia that this confiscation be lifted.

However, in spite of that, we will continue our activity and will constantly make sacrifices in defense of our nationalist principles. We derive our legitimacy from struggle, because legitimacy is not given and is not granted.

AL-NASHRAH: There are people who point out that special relations link you to the Libyan jamahiriyyah, especially following the meeting which brought you and Col al-Qadhafi together during one of his visits to Tunisia, and also on account of your statements and positions in support of Libya and Syria. What do you say in this regard?

Essid: Basically, this is the doing of the opposition forces which are trying to misrepresent the nationalists by trying constantly to link them to forces outside Tunisia. It is strange that we nationalists should be accused of importing Arab nationalism and that that statement should not be made with regard to the communists, the francophones who have become gallicized in various areas, [or] Americanized people holding capitalistic notions. This charge has been directed constantly at Arab nationalists in Tunisia since the days of 'Abd-al-Nasir; at one time they make it against Cairo, at another against Damascus, a third time against Baghdad, and today against Libya.

Nationalist Describes Bread Riots

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 13, 20 Feb 84 pp 10-12

[Text] Last January 26, the Tunisian authorities proceeded to arrest the secretary general of the Arab Nationalist Grouping Movement in Tunisia, Mr Bechir Essid, after he had faced an unsuccessful assassination attempt, according to his statement, during the bread demonstrations. The authorities released him at a later time, after they had decided to interrogate him and bring him to arraignment.

AL-NASHRAH presents the documents of the interrogation of Mr Essid here and publishes a brief interview it held with him on the sidelines during his current trial.

Ninety defense attorneys and 150 persons took part in the hearing.

On the basis of permission issued by the public prosecutor in Tunisia, Mr Hechmi Zammel, the Tunisian authorities decided to file a prosecution against the secretary general of the Arab Nationalist Grouping Movement and transfer him to the examining magistrate Larbi Boukardagha on the following charges:

Impugning the honor of the president and the members of the government.

Alluding to crimes of arson, robbery, murder and theft.

Publishing fraudulent items of news out of ill will which has the effect of infringing on public security and distributing publications causing detriment to public order in accordance with Chapters 48 and 49, Paragraph Three of Chapter 48 and Chapter 62 of the press law.

It has been decided that the interrogation will take place before the examining magistrate on Monday 1 February 1984.

On the day of the stipulated "interrogation," the judge was surprised by the appearance of 90 lawyers acting in proxy for the accused, including the professors and deans Mansour Cheffi, Fathi Zouhir and Lazhar Karoui Chabbi, Professor Brahim Bouderbala, chairman of the Society of Young Lawyers, Abdelwaheb Behi for the Human Rights Organization, Mohamed Ennaceur, Abderahman El Hila, Belkacem Khmais, Mustapha Smaoui, Lazhar Abdelhamid Chabbi, Mohamed Ennouri, Abdelaziz Belkadhi, Radhia Nasraoui, Hedi Abbès, Mohamed Dhahri and Bubaker Errais. The hall of the interrogation office was packed with lawyers, who flowed in to participate in the attendance as a way of expressing their solidarity with their professional colleague, on the one hand, and as a form of political solidarity on the other.

The examining magistrate and investigating arbiter at the outset refused to have a large number of lawyers act in proxy, on grounds that the office was small. However, the magistrate soon backed down in the face of the lawyers' insistence on adhering to their rights to act in proxy and in the face of Essid's threat to refuse to answer if it was determined that his colleagues would not be permitted to act in proxy for him. In fact, the interrogation turned into something resembling a demonstration.

Essid denied the charges attributed to him, asserting that what he had done did not in effect constitute grounds for holding a trial and could be considered tantamount to expression of a political point of view and an analysis of general domestic conditions in the context of the Arab Nationalist Grouping Movement, a domestic nationalist movement which exists legally on the stage and has the right to be active and take part in the country's political life.

[He stated] that the criticisms included in the declarations were only positions taken by the Grouping Movement, which it had expressed in statements submitted to the media. Regarding events which had recently taken place, he said "They consist of a severe popular uprising, in opposition to the position of the government and some bodies which just want to concentrate on certain excesses, ignoring the essential reasons which led to the outbreak of the events, especially the rise in grain products." As for the investigating committee, he opposed that because it represented only the regime's viewpoint and was restricted to conflicts among personnel in the regime, while the crisis was between the people and the ruling regime. He insisted that it was necessary to draw up a people's committee of all political parties and national organizations to take a comprehensive view of the nation's territory, all public issues, and the latest popular uprising as a whole.

The Statement on the Crisis

In practical terms there is nothing to explain Essid's imprisonment, release, then return for interrogation and investigation except a fiery statement issued by the grouping on the occasion of the "bread riot," a political statement which opened up the files of the security authorities and the political authorities both.

The statement on the crisis said:

"First of all, since we severely condemn the blunders of the ruling regime, which attempts to interpret the latest events as 'acts of commotion, robbery, destruction, arson and violence committed by fanatic groups, vagabonds, muggers, thieves and unemployed persons':

"Since we condemn most of the Tunisian media and press, which are subservient to the government and make utterances contrary to the true state of the country, merely publicizing certain excesses which are the nature of every popular uprising, as an independent phenomenon isolated from the movement's original environment, motives and basic goals, in order to divert people's attention from the proper direction and to prepare to create a victim or victims (scapegoats), so that the government can be freed from responsibility; our movement considers that the events which occurred recently are in their causative elements and their general orientations to be considered popular movements carried out by the repressed people of Tunisia who have been deprived of political, economic and social justice and do not enjoy the rights of citizenship. Therefore it is a serious uprising by the people which occurred to express the people's will and legitimate aspirations in response to the repression, deprivation and exploitation which threaten them.

"Second, since the Arab Nationalist Grouping Movement protests against the investigating committee and demands its dissolution, it stresses that on grounds that the government has acted aberrantly in interpreting events and directing the investigation in other than the proper direction. This is clear from the composition of the committee, which has four representatives for the authorities and lacks competent national jurisdiction by restricting its tasks to reviewing contradictions within the ruling regime to settle scores among its personnel, if only by attempting to bring the cause of the disorganization which occurred in its agencies back to the situation on 3 January 1984, as well as in the security forces and the people in charge of them, some of whose reactions to the masses in the streets and their positions seem to some extent to have been less ferocious and violent than some bodies demanded. This is clear proof that the regime did not gain awareness from the events and that it is still acting outside its real context, in contradiction to the course of matters, in opposition to the will of the people and contrary to national reconciliation.

"We most emphatically request the government:

"1. To stop the wave of arrests which the authorities' police forces are still carrying out among the ranks of the citizens.

"2. To announce the number of people killed, wounded and officially detained.

"3. To release all persons detained in the recent events, without any restriction or exception.

"4. To enable the defense spokesmen to visit their detained clients and to permit their families to get in touch with them and provide them with human necessities."

The statement ends by asserting:

"Fourth, our movement most firmly warns the ruling regime that keeping a large number of our people in a state of detention under bad circumstances for a long period for the purpose of investigating them and making wholesale accusations against them outside the context of the judiciary authorities while isolating them from their environment and preventing their lawyers and families from getting in touch with them are acts which constitute a great danger:

"1. Because they represent an obvious affront to the law and blatant contempt for morality, nationalism and humanity.

"2. Because if the government does not put a limit to them, grievous consequences will result from them.

"Fifth, we call on the Tunisian judiciary to bear its historic and national responsibilities on grounds that it is the judiciary authority with independent responsibility for providing every citizen with basic guarantees in accordance with the law. For this reason, it should exercise its authorities by assuming charge of the matter itself as far as the results of the events are concerned.

"Sixth, we demand that the police blockade around all the university faculties and secondary institutions be eliminated and that the campaigns of arrest, repression and persecution directed against the students in particular be stopped, and we demand that all the students detained be released so that our university and school youths may be able to go back to their studies in an atmosphere of security and confidence.

"Seventh, the Arab Nationalist Grouping Party demands that the body which was permitted to use arms against the people and to strike at the masses be identified and it demands that it be brought to trial for that."

A Conversation with Essid

The concomitant circumstances and aftereffects of the case have not yet been eliminated and are still in ferment. On the sidelines of the interrogation and investigation, AL-NASHRAH met with Essid and held the following interview with him:

AL-NASHRAH: How do you evaluate the latest events which flared up in Tunisia?

Were they just bread riots, or are there other dimensions behind them?

Essid: We consider that what has occurred in Tunisia recently is an popular uprising, not just acts of disturbance, robbery or arson which a group of

vagabonds, muggers and criminals carried out, as the ruling regime claims and as the official and semi-official media, even those that claim to be independent, are publicizing them. This was an uprising by the people because it was comprehensive and severe and it was a legitimate uprising because it was an expression of the will of the people, based on the premise of essential, serious justifications.

The politically, economically, socially and culturally deprived, oppressed and dispossessed segments of the people made the uprising and the events are therefore the doing of the people. Bread is a direct, sensitive element which helped the cup overflow.

Therefore the uprising has political and social dimensions and therefore it has deep roots which have arisen from an absence of political, social and cultural justice. It is therefore an uprising of all the deprived segments of the Tunisian people, and there was no foreign influence in the uprising, as has been observed from following the events. I believe that it is not in the power of any foreign force, however great it may be, to move the Tunisian people.

The Tunisian people have attained the maturity and growth that enable them to protect themselves by themselves, free from guardianship and interference, and they will not be deceived by anything misleading.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the subject of the succession and the struggle over it?

Essid: We consider that the struggle concerns the people alone, no one else, and that is the proper resolution which the nature of things demands. Legitimacy belongs to the people, who are the teacher and the master, and no one acts in their behalf on crucial issues. Therefore, no matter how severe the dispute among elements of the ruling regime within the government might be, the reins of affairs will settle in the hands of the people, and woe to anyone who goes against that.

AL-NASHRAH: What about democracy?

Essid: It is the solution which will save Tunisia. What is meant of course is comprehensive, real democracy, not a democracy of exceptions or one that has been modified, because democracy is for all or it does not exist. The ruling regime must be enlightened by the events, take a lesson from Lebanon and Chad, and choose between democracy and violence.

This is because prohibiting democracy means making the people and the nationalist currents resort to violence.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the ruling regime's position on your movement?

Essid: Of course it is the position of a tyrant, since it has intensified the acts of persecution against the fighting men in our movement and has put various forms of blockades around us.

Vexations, provocations, arrests, proscriptions of travel and trials: although we are a national movement that has its presence and has deep roots, the ruling regime has continued to persecute us. In the course of this it has deprived us even of the most minor exercise of individual and political rights, has prevented us from issuing our newspaper, AL-NIDA' AL-'ARABI, the organ of our movement, for 3 years, and has proscribed the activity of fighting members of the Grouping Movement. It has prevented me from traveling outside the nation of Tunisia, in my capacity as the secretary general, for a long time.

Now I have been brought to trial on serious charges concerning the people's latest uprising; they are all fabricated charges. I had previously been brought in and arrested numerous times by the Tunisian police and threatened if I did not suspend my activity and the activity of the Arab National Grouping Movement. This is not to mention the innumerable daily acts of surveillance and vexations. This is one aspect of the nature of the regime and its position regarding us.

AL-NASHRAH: What is the relationship between legal and legitimate permission, in your view?

Essid: We consider that our movement is legitimate, and its legitimacy is derived from the struggle, the people and the nation. Our legitimacy does not need to be validated by the ruling regime. We are a national movement with deep roots in terms of the masses, civilization and nation. It is a legitimate presence that exists on the stage, and no one can eliminate its role or silence its voice. If permission is acquired, as far as we are concerned, that is just a declaration by the ruling regime that it will not oppose our movement through persecution or embargoes and consequently is nothing more than a sign of acceptance of dialogue on the country's affairs with a national movement.

AL-NASHRAH: What is your movement's position on the opposition?

Essid: We believe that every national opposition movement, those the ruling regime has recognized and those it has not, should exist and be active.

We have always called for the formation of a popular front around national focal points which are the object of agreement. We are constantly working to establish sound relations between ourselves and all of them, we honor all nationalist currents, and we consider that even if they differ with us in their views they have their right to be able to express themselves, exist and take part in national life.

AL-NASHRAH: What is the movement's position on the recent events?

Essid: We had victims in the latest people's uprising (persons killed and wounded), and some persons put in prisons. We consider it a people's uprising because it is comprehensive, and we consider it legitimate, because it had essential, justifying causes. It is an expression of the people and the result of deterioration in general conditions. It is also the result of a fundamental dispute which exists between the people and the regime, and there is no other explanation for it.

The description the ruling regime tries to give to the events, that they were an action by a group of vagabonds and muggers, is a sort of gross blunder. We deplore this description because they were a popular uprising. What the official, semi-official and even independent media are circulating is a fraud and deception in order to attempt to cover up the regime's inadequacy and failure.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the violence?

Essid: It is the ruling regime which is practicing violence against the people and is making it mandatory that the people react. Imprisoning liberals constitutes violence, and firing on the people is the most violent manifestation of violence. Issuing a tyrannical law that represses people's freedoms is violence, and preventing movements from acting and expressing themselves is violence. Therefore, what the people did recently is not violence, but is a necessary reaction to the violence of the authorities; therefore it is not possible to eliminate violence from a given society unless official violence is eliminated before all else.

AL-NASHRAH: Where, then, do you stand on the recent events?

Essid: We are always with the people and on the side of the people, on the side of the deprived and oppressed.

AL-NASHRAH: What political movements have the greatest control over the recent events and the future?

Essid: The ones that are effective in getting the man on the street to take action.

AL-NASHRAH: What about you?

Essid: Yes, we are among those who have an effect on the people on the stage. Do not forget that we are a national movement.

AL-NASHRAH: And what about your activity?

Essid: It is continuing, of course, regardless of any pressure which is imposed upon us.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the results of the uprising in the context of your party, specifically?

Essid: In the uprising, our party lost some people killed in action and some of our brothers were wounded. Among the people martyred was the young man Loutfi Traboulsi, a native of Jedida.

In addition, Prof Tabet Gouader is still imprisoned. In general, it is not possible for us to make further clarifications yet, because contacts with a number of fighting men whose fate is unknown have been cut off.

Workers' Movement Expresses Ideology

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 16, 12 Mar 84 pp 22, 23

[Text] When the Tunisian new left emerged it benefitted from the experiences of the new left in Europe, which arose outside the framework of the European communist parties, took a position in opposition to them and observed their mistakes. The new left in Tunisia, as in most Arab countries, has tried to benefit from the experiences of the European new left. A number of movements have been established outside the framework and to the left of the Arab communist parties. The Tunisian Worker's Movement is one of these new movements; we are herewith trying to learn about this movement through a meeting with one of its leaders, who preferred not to have his name disclosed for considerations which are no secret to anyone.

AL-NASHRAH: What are the organizational, ideological and political roots of the Tunisian Marxist-Leninist left which arose and developed on the sidelines of the Tunisian communist party?

The worker: The credit for the establishment of this current can be given to a group of young students who had emigrated at the start of the sixties and issued a journal of research and studies which they called AFAQ TUNISIYAH, whose slogan is "for a better Tunisia." This group opposed the Tunisian socialist experiment, whose pioneer was the former Tunisian minister of economy Ahmed Ben Salah. It also opposed the Tunisian Communist Party's techniques of action and struggle. Since 1969, this group has embraced Marxist ideology and Mao Zedong's thinking. This position has usually been costly for them since the regime changed its treatment of them. The trials of personnel in this organization have been numerous and the verdicts have occasionally amounted to 20 years at hard labor.

AL-NASHRAH: In spite of the relative clarity of this organization's ideology, programs and goals, it is still plagued by a number of schisms. The thinking of the seventies has been distinguished by a proliferation of Marxist organizations in Tunisia. Are there local causes for this or is that because of the intensification of the conflict within the world communist movement?

The worker: Until the seventies, there was the Perspectives Group, which is now called the Tunisian Worker's Organization. This was the only Marxist organization alongside the Tunisian Communist Party. Domestic and labor events then took place which helped escalate the upheavals within the Tunisian Worker organization and consequently helped a number of Marxist groups come to prominence, especially among emigre students. One of the most important causes which have led to schisms is the issue of Arab unity, that is, the question whether Tunisia is a united, independent nation or a country which belongs to a fragmented nation struggling for its unity. Also, there is the issue of the position on the authorities, their nature and the manner of dealing with them. That is, in other words, is the contradiction between the authorities and the people severe and hostile or is there a possibility of dealing with a segment of the authorities? In addition to this issue, Marxists in Tunisia have been affected by the intensification of the

struggle inside the world communist movement, such as the position on the Chinese theory of the three worlds and the position on Mao Zedong's thinking.

It is worth pointing out that the armed events which occurred in the city of Gafsa in January 1980 helped make a number of Marxist organizations go into hiding and helped underline the role of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor as a mass union organization which is capable of accommodating a number of sensitive political feelings.

AL-NASHRAH: There are people who believe that the source of the numerous rifts which the Tunisian Worker organization has experienced lies in the Stalinist methods relied on in the management of conflicts and also in the desire of many Tunisian Marxists for a schism and the establishment of new organizations for the most trivial of reasons.

The worker: I recognize that the struggle has sometimes assumed serious, pathological forms because most of the fighting men have been accustomed to methods of fighting within the student movement, which is distinguished by the use of distorted statements in place of proper criticism and rapid decisions instead of calm debate. However, the reasons for the disputes remain essential and real, because the situation is restricted to the adoption and defense of positions, indeed, more than that, their sanctification. People who believed in the possibility of exploiting contradictions among the authorities sanctified their position by dealing with figures of authority, especially in the Tunisian General Federation of Labor. Regarding the issue of disputes over the evaluation of international conditions, there are people who now believe, indeed on every occasion reiterate, that the United States of America is no longer the basic enemy of peoples but that it is now possible to make an alliance with it to confront the Soviet Union.

AL-NASHRAH: Where has the Tunisian Marxist movement gone, and what is its conception of the new stage, which is characterized by the grant of permission to many opposition organizations to pursue open activity?

The worker: From the organizational standpoint, only the Tunisian Worker organization continues to be a Marxist-Leninist organization, alongside the Tunisian Communist Party, which has given notice about itself in the papers and in all demonstrations. The scope of activity of the other organizations which split off from the Tunisian Worker, which still publicize their existence, is restricted to working within the unions and in student circles.

As for us, in addition to our activity within the Tunisian General Federation of Labor and student circles and our participation in all political and cultural demonstrations in the country, we are now concentrating our attention more and more on the intellectual side, because we believe that the alienation of many fighting men from our organization can be attributed to our neglect of the intellectual aspect in the seventies. One should observe that the communist labor movement is going through a delicate stage which requires that we make intensified intellectual efforts to deal with the most important sensitive issues such as the evaluation of the Soviet experiment and the Chinese experiment.

AL-NASHRAH: What are your relations with Arab Marxist organizations and what is your evaluation of these movements?

The worker: While the Tunisian Communist Party maintains firm relations with the classic Arab communist parties, we are totally unaware of the actual state of Arab Marxist movements which are organizationally independent of the Arab communist parties, for reasons which are objective and subjective. As far as we are concerned, we have taken exaggerated interest in local and international issues; in the case of Arab issues, we have paid attention only to the major issues, such as the Arab-Zionist struggle and the Lebanese civil war in periods when it became intensified. There are other reasons which have aggravated the split between us and the other Arab countries, most important of which is the absence of channels of contact among countries in the Arab nation. For example, we follow Arab events through the Western media; only most recently have some Arabic newspapers and magazines started to reach us. Even exhibits of Arab books in Tunisia are restricted to the display of books on the cultural past; books which have been newly released reach us only after they have been out for a while. All these factors have caused us to ignore the actual everyday state of the Arab countries, and consequently we have not been able to form links with Arab Marxist organizations.

AL-NASHRAH: What is your appraisal of the Arab opposition and its activity?

The worker: First, there is no one opposition; rather, there are Arab opposition movements. There is the religious current, which has reached the point where it can influence the authorities' decrees and programs, such as the Sudanese religious movement, which has caused Ja'far al-Numayri's regime to wear religious clothing. There is the liberal opposition which demands that constitutions and some social and political reforms be applied. There is a new phenomenon embodied in the activity of some Arab intellectuals and their recent formation of the organization for the defense of human rights in the Arab nation, headed by the former Egyptian minister Fathi Radwan. I might also mention the Arab People's Conference. Has these opposition forces' activity been commensurate with the importance and gravity of events or not? The fact is that I doubt it. It is enough for us to evaluate this opposition's actions alongside the powerful protest movements against nuclear armament which the Europeans make to be convinced that Arab opposition activity is sterile.

The Arab opposition has been affected and weakened because of the Arab regimes' policies and economic and social programs, since all Arab regimes, without exception, have entered into the cycle of international capitalist production. Danish chicken, video sets and American jeans have become widespread in Arab markets, and Arab citizens have started to rush after the Western style of consumption without on most occasions having the resources of Western citizens. They have become prepared to offer anything, even to traffic in their own integrity, for the sake of "winning" Western goods. Their interests and concerns have been put to the side and the task of the Arab opposition movements has become very difficult, especially since they are now exposed to terrible repression. While the Arabs are backward in many forms of technology, they are developed in methods of repression and police

persecution. The Beirut fighting and the Sabra and Shatila massacres have been a scandal for all Arab regimes, since hundreds of thousands of Jews demonstrated in Tel Aviv while the Arab man on the street was silent. This can be attributed to the desire of foreign forces to maintain the state of fragmentation in the Arab nation and keep it as a source of wealth, a market for the promotion of goods and a field for testing the most modern weapons. As a result of that, Arab societies have become a caricature of Western societies. The responsibility for changing this state of affairs lies basically on the shoulders of progressive intellectuals, workers and all creative innovators, since the responsibility of realizing real Arab unity under the leadership of the toiling classes of workers, peasants and poor people, far removed from the influence of all dominating forces obstructing the unity and development of the Arab nation, lies solely with them. However, this unity can be realized only when the Arab masses rise up from their struggles. Otherwise the fate of the Arab nation will be similar to that of nations which became obliterated throughout history. Historical inevitability can be realized only when the circumstances to make it succeed are present.

Revolutionary Group Discusses Violence

Nicosia AL-NASHRAH in Arabic No 17, 26 Mar 84 pp 19-21

[Text] How does the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Tunisia present itself? What does it want, and what are its activities?

AL-NASHRAH posed these and other questions to one of the figures in this movement, Amara Dhaou Ben Nail, the person currently in charge of the movement's political and foreign relations committee, as a member of its collective leadership, and one of the people to be given a death sentence after the Gafsa events of 1980, which officially announced the birth of this movement. He declared its responsibility for what went on in Gafsa a few days after the events, because he managed to escape abroad.

What about the movement? What does it want? This is the first question AL-NASHRAH asked Ben Nail. He offered the following answers, which constituted an entree to this dialogue:

Ben Nail: We are an extension of the opposition movement in Tunisia, the Youssefist Movement, which was led by the late Salah Ben Youssef. Ben Youssef is considered to be the person who implanted the foundations of nationalist-orientated Arab action in Tunisia.

Our activity began in 1970, and our first action was in 1972, when the name of the organization was declared in Beirut through the magazine BAYRUT AL-MISA'. At that time we bore the title National Progressive Front for the Liberation of Tunisia. This declaration was accompanied by the publication of the front's charter in the same magazine.

The organization is nationalist, progressive and unionist. It raises the call of radical change through revolutionary violence.

AL-NASHRAH: What is the meaning of the word "liberation" which the organization's original name and the current one share?

Ben Nail: We consider French-speaking dominant intellectual colonialism to be much more dangerous than the material colonialism that is found among soldiers, for example, because the latter colonial condition permits the use of weapons against an occupying force, but it is not possible to use arms against the people of the nation who are intellectually linked to the occupying force. Therefore we have used the word "liberation."

AL-NASHRAH: Let us go back to the organization's development. The declaration of its existence was made abroad, but what about its activities inside Tunisia?

Ben Nail: The first trial of the organization took place in 1974; in it, 33 fighting men were sentenced on various charges, including blowing up the American embassy, the Jewish Bnai Brith and the headquarters of the ruling party, then on the charge of belonging to an organization without a permit and committing aggression against the president. The verdicts ranged from less than a year to 16 years. Among the people who were convicted were the late Ahmed Mesbah Dhaou Marghni, who led the Gafsa uprising later militarily with Ezzeddine Cherif, who carried out political coordination for the operation.

AL-NASHRAH: But there are people who say that Ezzeddine Cherif belongs to another organization.

Ben Nail: Ezzeddine Cherif is from the Youssefist Movement. He took part in the 1962 revolution led by Cheikh Abdelaziz Akremi; he was sentenced to prison for 20 years, of which he served 10 years.

In 1975, we managed to get him out of Tunisia through the National Progressive Front, and he reached the Libyan Jamahiriya in October. I met him personally in my car on the Libyan border at an area called Furhud. He asked to join the front at the same time, and the request for membership is still in our possession in his handwriting.

AL-NASHRAH: Do you consider yourselves then to be the organizational extension of the Youssefist Movement?

Ben Nail: Precisely. The front is an extension of the Youssefist Movement, although it went through a phase led by Abdelaziz Chouchane, who sold the movement to the Tunisian regime, as well as being an American agent. Because of that, the movement went through a period of stagnation from which we had to rescue it.

AL-NASHRAH: When was the organization's name changed from the National Front to the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Tunisia?

Ben Nail: After the Gafsa operation, for special reasons related to the struggle inside Tunisia. On 3 February 1980 we declared the name of the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Tunisia as a replacement for the front. One of the reasons for that was that a number of organizations had declared their responsibility for the Gafsa events, although the people who went into Gafsa were from the front. We had agreed that the declaration

about the events would be made by someone in Paris. The agreement with him was made by me and by Ezzeddine Cherif, but instead of carrying out the agreement he made the first declaration in the name of the Popular Armed Forces. We still do not know why he acted in this manner.

Conversely, Ali Chelfouh in Beirut declared that it was the front that had held the movement in Gafsa, although we had not agreed on that. A few days after the uprising, which took place on 27 January 1980, I was in Paris and on 3 February I declared the birth of the movement, this movement which is still in existence and engages extensively in its activity.

AL-NASHRAH: Has the movement issued a periodical speaking on its behalf, or some literature?

Ben Nail: Yes, we have issued close to 20 issues of the central paper, AL-THAWRAH, but it has now been suspended. We hope that it will come out.

AL-NASHRAH: Numerous Tunisian organizations circulate nationalist slogans. How do you view the matter?

Ben Nail: We believe in Arab unity on material grounds: Arab unity will guarantee the glory of the Arab people. It is not a goal in itself but a means.

AL-NASHRAH: Unity in stages, for example?

Ben Nail: If it constitutes a basic nucleus. In my conception, a solution to Tunisia's problems will not be possible outside the context of unionist principles. However, if a bilateral or trilateral union is to be established, the condition is that it be a nucleus for a comprehensive union.

AL-NASHRAH: How in your opinion is it possible to realize such a union?

Ben Nail: Arab unity will be realized only at the point of the sword. There is no scope for a unity which is sustained by democratic means and dialogue. Our example is the 1958 union; the people who led the union process in Syria later led the process of secession.

AL-NASHRAH: What have you done to that end?

Ben Nail: We believe that actual action is the basic point. Therefore we have been careful to act within the national context. We tried to fight with the revolutionaries of Dhofar, and did fight with Polisario against Moroccan reaction. Ahmed Marghni worked with them, along with a group of young people, and is very well known among them.

This is a firm assertion of the principle "Hit your enemy everywhere." Reaction is the national enemy as far as all progressives are concerned.

In addition, we have fought with the Iraqi progressive forces, in concert with a detachment in Kurdistan. This strict tenet has special importance in practical terms in preparing the psychology of the Arab citizen so that he will find no embarrassment in fighting reaction wherever it is.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the Palestinian revolution?

Ben Nail: We have a presence within its forces.

AL-NASHRAH: Let us go back to the issue of the establishment of the organization. There are people who say that the Libyan Jamahiriyyah was behind the establishment of it.

Ben Nail: The front was established in the jamahiriyyah and its activities are centered there. Brothers in the jamahiriyyah have enabled us to protect ourselves from being persecuted by the Tunisian regime. There is nothing benevolent about the Libyans' standing alongside us; rather, it is an operating premise founded on the principles they have declared.

Libya has declared a position against reaction, and we are against reaction. Therefore we take the same position. However, there are people who call us proteges of the Libyans. I say that the only place where we have been able to live has been inside the jamahiriyyah.

We have tried to get progressive, unionist countries to give us room to act, if only in narrow limits, but we have been able to do so only in the jamahiriyyah, which deserves the credit. Anyone who claims otherwise, if that is a country, let it offer us the room, and if it is a party, let it offer us the room. I from my position of responsibility in this organization have got in touch with all progressive countries and have not met a positive response, and the contacts have not yet yielded benefits. Libya is the only one which is sustaining us, in spite of the problems we cause it.

AL-NASHRAH: Has military training taken place there also?

Ben Nail: Training has taken place in a number of locations, with the Palestinian revolution and with Polisario. There has been training in Libya only as part of the general training activities.

AL-NASHRAH: However, there is information about special camps of yours.

Ben Nail: We had a camp for a while after the Gafsa operation, but it was shut down.

AL-NASHRAH: What about financing?

Ben Nail: We finance ourselves internally. We have a very large number of Tunisians (close to 100,000) in the jamahiriyyah specifically, and it is possible for them to cover our expenses, which are not very large.

AL-NASHRAH: Can one say that you now actually exist as an organization inside Tunisia?

Ben Nail: If that was not the case we would not have been speaking in the name of these people. Another reason is that we believe that revolutionary change can take place only from inside.

AL-NASHRAH: Is your organizational body large inside the country?

Ben Nail: It is difficult for us to render judgment on ourselves. You yourself can discover our real size through your own means.

AL-NASHRAH: I mean its magnitude and consequently its effectiveness.

Ben Nail: The organization can be measured by two things: the sentences which have been handed down against it and the work it has done. If we apply these two standards, we cannot be compared with any organization inside Tunisia.

AL-NASHRAH: What about your relations with the political forces there?

Ben Nail: Relations with everyone are good. We do not have any objections to anyone, although we make radical change through revolutionary violence a condition for coordinated activity.

AL-NASHRAH: What then about coordination?

Ben Nail: We cannot talk about details, but the process of coordination, in light of this condition, increases the difficulty of the situation.

AL-NASHRAH: Are there people who impose this sort of condition, such as the Movement of Free Unificationists?

Ben Nail: I have not heard of such a movement in Tunisia. The organizations that exist in Tunisia are well known.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the religious forces that believe in armed action?

Ben Nail: They do not believe in it because they do not take any initiative toward acts of violence.

AL-NASHRAH: What about your relations with them?

Ben Nail: We refuse to act in the name of religion, because that involves usurping characteristics that are to be found in other people. It would be better for us to refer a religion to the religious text that exists in the Koran or the sayings and doings of the prophet. Anyone talking organizationally in the name of Islam is dealing with a matter outside the organization, outside Islam, and that is proper only if we want to go back to the situation of the era of the church in the Middle Ages.

AL-NASHRAH: On that basis, what is the effect of the religious tide on your organization?

Ben Nail: Religion, as far as we are concerned, has special importance and we cannot abandon it.

AL-NASHRAH: But there are people who have described the people who carried out the Gafsa operation as a religious force, and you are among them.

Ben Nail: That is for purposes of discrediting us, because the Tunisian regime knows very well what analyses and positions the Tunisian people take concerning people who are called Moslem Brothers, and it knows very well that there is a rift between nationalist, unionist, Nasirist thinking and the Moslem Brothers, who we know are agents of the American reactionaries although there are people in the base of the movement who call for a return to the Islamic religion in letter and spirit.

AL-NASHRAH: There is a followup question before we finish with the subject. Do you consider yourselves a Nasirist organization?

Ben Nail: Yes. Our generation was raised by 'Abd-al-Nasir.

AL-NASHRAH: Getting back to the subject, it seems that the Islamic tendencies are the ones that now have a hold on the Tunisian man in the street.

Ben Nail: There is a very simple explanation for this. The ruling party considers that the nationalist movement is on the list of its basic enemies. For these reasons, it has hit intensively and violently at the nationalist currents, since no one has been executed except nationalists (four trials since Salah Ben Youssef's movement).

Why do Bourguiba and the ruling party put emphasis on the nationalists? Because the change that is to threaten them in time will come from them, and because the Tunisian people as a whole side with this tendency. Therefore no applications for official recognition of nationalist organizations are accepted.

AL-NASHRAH: What about Bechir Essid?

Ben Nail: Bechir Essid submitted an application but they did not approve it. He has derived his legitimacy from having submitted his application and not getting an answer within 91 days. He is now going to trial, now that his passport has been withdrawn. They are even trying to assign responsibility for the latest bread revolution, for which no one has declared responsibility, to the nationalists.

AL-NASHRAH: Does that mean that there is official encouragement of religious movements?

Ben Nail: To answer this question, we must refer back to the manner in which the Islamic tendencies arose in Tunisia, and how they have behaved.

In the sixties, the ruling party was accused of being hostile to the Islamic religion and of promoting degeneracy (equality between men and women in law on the subject of inheritance, enforced breaking of the fast during Ramadan, the dissolution of Tunisian religious trusts, the issuance of the personal status law and the attempt to shut down Zeitounia University).

Then there was the degeneracy and spread of fornication which tourist activity brought in. These causes all became aggravated to the point where the party began to be criticized by the religion. At this point, the party

thought of a way which would enable it to reply to this charge against itself, and it agreed to the formation of a society called the Society to Preserve the Holy Koran and Upright Morality. This society was established with the party's money and attention. At the beginning, its chairman was Cheikh El Habib El Mestaoui, who was a member of the party central committee.

This society did indeed gain currency when a number of young people of all tendencies joined it -- Rached Ghannouchi, Abdelfattah Mourou, Hassan Ghodbani and so forth. When this society gained currency, it found that forces were watching and monitoring it from abroad. These were the Moslem Brothers and Saudi Arabia, which managed to contact Rached Ghannouchi and Mourou and support them. As a result this group split off from the society under a new name, "the Call," under Mourou's leadership, and that became the Islamic Tendency. Rached Ghannouchi continued to be responsible for the Islamic Tendency throughout the Maghreb, and Abdelfattah Mourou was responsible for the Brothers in Tunisia. This situation continued until 1981.

After Khomeyni's revolution, under pressure from the people in the base, the magazine AL-MA'RIFAH, which represents a tendency that supports Iran, was issued. This did not please the Brothers and Saudi Arabia, and the regime fabricated the operation of the Korba Club against them and imprisoned them. The situation had been agreed on by the Saudis and the Bourguibists, and therefore it was not odd that Mourou should have been released after Mzali came back from Saudi Arabia in 1982.

The Islamic tendencies broke up. There was the Consultative Tendency, led by Hassan Ghodbani, and the Islamic Left Current, led by Slaheddine Jouchi. They have a magazine named 15-21, meaning the 15th Islamic century and the 21st Christian century. There may be other secret religious organizations.

AL-NASHRAH: Let us go back to your organization, the Revolutionary Movement. Does it now have activities inside Tunisia?

Ben Nail: Our activity is basically concentrated there. We have learned great lessons from the sufferings we have endured domestically and abroad, and have essentially concentrated on radical change from within Tunisia. Therefore, since 1980 our activity has been inside Tunisia.

AL-NASHRAH: Have you carried out other operations since Gafsa, specifically?

Ben Nail: No, because no action since Gafsa is worth mentioning.

AL-NASHRAH: Did you have a part in the bread revolution recently?

Ben Nail: No political group can lay claim to the bread revolution, because revolution is spontaneous. Its apparent cause was bread but the real reason was repression and unemployment in Tunisia. We certainly played a provocative role, as did others.

AL-NASHRAH: Do you have relations with Tunisian Marxists?

Ben Nail: Marxist thinking, advanced as humanist thinking, exists, and one must know it and examine it.

AL-NASHRAH: Does a marriage exist between the nationalist thinking you embrace and Marxism?

Ben Nail: No, but we respect this thinking on grounds that it is progressive and humanist.

AL-NASHRAH: After Beirut, part of the resistance's activity shifted to Tunisia. This prompts us to wonder about relations with it.

Ben Nail: We have no relations with FATAH for very many reasons, one being that FATAH's representative in Tunisia (Hakam Bal'awi) conspired against all the groups of the nationalist opposition forces to help the Ministry of the Interior.

On the other hand FATAH's relations with Tunisia have been good, especially since the Arab League moved to Tunisia.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the remaining resistance forces?

Ben Nail: We have relations with everyone except FATAH.

AL-NASHRAH: What about the movement's prisoners in Tunisia?

Ben Nail: We had 20 persons imprisoned in the Gafsa operation and some of them were sentenced to life.

AL-NASHRAH: Do you have prisoners in other Arab countries?

Ben Nail: Yes.

AL-NASHRAH: Where?

Ben Nail: [Response not cited]

AL-NASHRAH: Finally, you raise the issue of revolutionary violence. Does that mean that you are in favor of the assassination of individuals?

Ben Nail: When that realizes political objectives on behalf of the people, we believe in it.

AL-NASHRAH: Does that mean that there are persons or figures who have been put on your hit lists?

Ben Nail: That is another subject, but if we consider that it will serve the Tunisian people to assassinate someone, we will not hesitate.

AL-NASHRAH: What about individual decisions in this regard?

Ben Nail: No, our decisions are collective, because our form of leadership is collective.

11887

CSO: 4504/450

IRAQ, TURKEY SIGN PACT TO EXPAND OIL PIPELINE

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1450, 17 Aug 84 p 45

[Article: "First Signs of Iraqi-Turkish Cooperation"]

[Text] Rumors which have recently surrounded the construction of the Iraq-Turkey pipeline have stopped as Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, signed an Iraqi-Turkish protocol in Ankara to carry out the project, which will transport 600,000 barrels of Iraqi oil daily to Turkey.

Taha Yasin Ramadan explained after completion of the protocol that the project will be completed in 18 months, and that its implementation will begin a new stage in the cooperation between Iraq and Turkey. Among of the most important indicators of this new stage are the talks which will be beginning soon concerning the connecting of two electrical power networks across the common border between the two countries.

On the other hand, Iraq has developed its fleet of trucks which transport petroleum to the Jordanian Port of 'Aqabah in order to circumvent the anticipated blockade on its petroleum exports. It is well known that the only pipeline that carries Iraqi petroleum exports--at the present time--is the Kirkuk-Dortyol line, which passes over Turkish soil.

While there are projects to build new pipelines through Jordan and Saudi Arabia, these are long term projects; Iraq has attempted to increase its volume of petroleum exports by means of trucks. Iraqi Deputy Minister of Petroleum 'Abd Allah al-Samarra'i recently revealed that the volume of Iraqi crude oil exported by truck is 12,000 tons per day, or 80,000 barrels; these quantities are transported over Turkish and Jordanian soil, and from there exported abroad.

Iraq officially confirmed these export figures following Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's announcement on 16 July that his government is studying the laying of a new pipeline to carry oil over Turkish soil, in addition to the existing pipeline, which is about to go into operation and will ultimately raise the export capacity to a million barrels per day.

The Iraqi oil truck transportation policy includes 25,000 barrels of refined products per day, 15,000 barrels of which go through Turkey. The policy also includes the transport of large quantities of heavy crude oil through Jordan, but Iraqi authorities have not yet revealed the actual figures for these shipments.

Iraq has placed its faith in land transportation as a practical, if temporary, alternative to the cutoff of its petroleum exports through Syria and the waters of the Gulf. The Iraqi government will need hundreds of large trucks to meet a contract it signed early this year requiring it to supply Jordan with 473,000 tons of crude oil annually through overland routes between the two countries.

At the present time three large companies, two of them Turkish and one Kuwaiti, have taken on the task of transporting Iraqi petroleum by truck to Turkish ports and to the Port of 'Aqabah in Jordan.

The importance of this means of distributing Iraqi petroleum is illustrated by the Ministry of Petroleum's confirmation that the price of Iraqi petroleum exported to Jordan in 1984 has reached 110 million dollars. Another confirmation, of the importance of the role of land transportation in relieving the Iraqi petroleum export crisis, came when the Iraqi Petroleum and Gas Transportation Institute signed two contracts with the Vozila Garica Company of Yugoslavia to buy 229 trucks with which to transport crude oil and refined petroleum.

Iraq still hopes to overcome the obstacles which interfere indirectly with the construction of a connecting link that would permit the flow of oil from the al-Basrah area to the Saudi pipeline which transports crude oil from the eastern part of the kingdom to the Red Sea. In the event of the construction of such a link, Iraq hopes to export 500,000 additional barrels of crude oil per day.

This project faces financial obstacles which have yet to be resolved. Iraq intends to finance the estimated cost of 6 million dollars with revenues expected from the new pipeline; this will be done in the manner of the procedures for the proposed pipeline to the Jordanian Port of 'Aqabah. Iraqi government sources say that they intend to obtain sufficient financing for the Iraqi-Saudi pipeline within 5 years, through loans against Iraqi petroleum imports or from the companies that will lay the pipeline.

Official Iraqi sources say they are confident that all obstacles in the way of connecting Iraqi petroleum to the Saudi pipeline will be overcome very soon.

9310

CSO: 4404/648

DROP NOTED IN STOCKS TRADED

Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 23 Jul 84 pp 1, 23

[Article: "Amman Financial Market: 26 Percent Drop in the Number of Shares Traded and 56 Percent in the Volume of Trading from Last Year"]

[Text] Amman - AL-RA'Y - Statistics of the Amman financial market point to a drop of 26 percent in the number of shares traded during the first half of the current year compared to the first half of last year, a 56 percent drop in the volume of trading measured in Jordanian dinars in this year from the same period last year, and a drop of 40 percent in the number of contracts signed.

The number of shares traded in the first half of the current year reached 23,050,432 shares, while the number of shares traded last year was 31,248,528 dinars [as published]; the volume of trading reached 37,980,322 dinars, compared with a volume of 85,256,441 dinars last year. There were 38,943 contracts signed, compared to 64,715 contracts last year.

Sources in the Amman Financial Market cited the world crisis of economic stagnation, leading to a drop in stock prices for most public corporations, which reflected the international and domestic economic situation on the one hand and the situation in the economic sectors on the other hand, upon which companies depend and which lowered the level of development of these sectors by stages, as the reasons behind the drop in stock prices and in the volume of trading.

It is expected, however, that the second half of the current year will see a rise in stock prices and trading, which will lead to an increase in the volume of trading as a result of the recovery which the Jordanian economy has lately begun to see. Since the beginning of this week, continued improvements have been seen on the trading board in the quantity of stocks purchased on the market.

This indicates that investors feel that stock prices for corporations have dropped far below their true value, producing a greater desire to buy and seize the investment opportunity which will reward purchasers in light of present rising prices, particularly in the market. The second half of the fiscal year has begun for the companies; certain profits which are to be distributed by the companies to shareholders will provide them with a greater return than they invested in view of the realities of the present market.

BRIEFS

EXPATRIATE LABOR STUDY--Amman - PETRA - Dr Muhammad al-Samadi, chairman of the Department of Economics at the Royal Society, announced that the society has held negotiations recently with the Frederick Albert Institute of West Germany to conduct a study of the economic and social effects of guest laborers in Jordan. He added that the study, which will be financed by the aforementioned German Institute, will study the size of the guest labor force in Jordan, its geographic distribution, and its composition by nationality. It will estimate the amount of income the force transfers abroad and the effects of this on the Jordanian balance of payments, and analyze the positive and negative effects of the foreign laborers on the Jordanian economy and the future of Jordanian development. It will explain the effects of foreign laborers on the labor market in Jordan and its implications for production and consumption by means of field surveys to be conducted by employees of the Department of Economics at the university. He said that an agreement has also been reached to form a council, to which will be invited Arab experts and workers, to study the results of this study after its completion and to discuss the many working papers which will be presented during the study concerning this subject. [Text] [Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 11 Jul 84 p 3] 9310

AL-'AQABAH TRADE STATISTICS--Amman - PETRA - Phosphates exported through the Port of 'Aqabah in the first 3 months of the current year reached 908,371 tons, compared to 809,695 tons in the same period last year. A statistical report by the Institute of Ports said that the number of steamships which berthed at the Port of 'Aqabah in the first 3 months of the current year reached 591 steamships, as opposed to 654 steamships in the same period last year. Passengers departing from the Port of 'Aqabah in the aforementioned period numbered 96,104, and the number of departing passengers [sic] reached 2,425. The report said that total exports through the port in the same period were 1,532,558 tons, as opposed to 899,730 tons last year; imported goods reached 1,420,961 tons, as opposed to 1,750,013 tons in the same period last year. With regard to the import and export of ores through the port, the report shows a significant increase in phosphates transported to the port by rail. Phosphates unloaded at the port from trains in the first 3 months of the current year reached 783,847 tons, as opposed to 464,733 tons in the same period last year; phosphates unloaded at the port from ships reached 201,663 tons, as opposed to 250,716 tons in the same period last year. The report noted that domestic Jordanian goods exported through the port reached 153,757 tons in the first 3 months of the current year, as opposed to 48,709 tons in the same period last year. In the same period, imported goods were only 520,440 tons as opposed to 911,431 tons in the same period last year. [Text] [Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 12 Jul 84 p 2] 9310

AGREEMENT WITH YAR--Amman - AL-RA'Y - A royal decree was issued for an economic and trade agreement between the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan and the Yemen Arab Republic; the agreement was ratified recently by the Council of Ministers. This agreement included a number of provisions for strengthening and developing economic relations between the two fraternal countries, full exemptions for all agricultural products, natural wealth and industrial products in both countries, the establishment of trade centers, and continuous exhibitions in the two countries. The agreement also provided for the formation of a joint council to meet regularly to review and assess the progress of this agreement. [Text]
[Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 23 Jul 84 p 1] 9310

CSO: 4404/607

LACK OF CULTURAL DEPTH IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION DECRIED

Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic No 813, 1 Aug 84 pp 14-19

[Article by 'Abd-al-Fattah 'Inani: "Dr Mahmud Safar, Deputy Minister of Higher Education: I Am Sorry that Many Saudi Universities Are Graduating Clerks!]

[Text] The Chinese philosopher Confucius says "The student who learns without thinking is nothing. The student who thinks without learning is a threat." Dr Mahmud Safar, the deputy minister of higher education and secretary general of the Higher Council of Universities, says that many of our Saudi universities are graduating "clerks" and that anyone looking for excuses or pretexts by which to justify the current deficiency in the level of graduates should be considered inadequate and unable to realize what stage the country is going through. He demanded that guardianship over Saudi girls be eliminated and that their role be reformulated in a proper, sound manner devoid of extremism or excess. He interjected an important issue by saying that the humane and social science curricula in our universities and the universities of the Arab world have been transmitted "verbatim" from the West. Regarding Western technical civilization, he said that we have taken a position of the "customer" who imports things without importing their significance along with them. The dialogue contains other bold, realistic views.

[Question] Regarding the kingdom's universities, a tremendous receptivity to theoretical faculties on the part of students has been observed, while the scientific and technical faculties have been suffering from a severe shortage, creating a kind of unproductive unemployment in government departments and bureaus. What is your comment on this?

[Answer] The answer to this question requires that we go back a little to some statistics. In the kingdom, as the reader knows, there are seven universities, distributed among its various provinces: in these, there are 60 faculties, 30 of which are faculties for applied studies. In the 1981-82 statistics, we can notice that the total number of graduates of humane faculties in a single year comes to 10 times the total of graduates of medical faculties in the kingdom. If we compare the number of medical faculties with the number of faculties of humane sciences, we will find a big difference which is approximately as large. Therefore the issue is not the presence of people or resources; rather, it has other social and cultural dimensions. The government has not yet intervened to guide students into particular faculties; rather, it has given them

and their guardians absolute freedom to choose the education they want. I believe that what the development plans, especially the fourth development plan, whose strategy has been set out and which has been approved, need in a subsequent stage is for the government to intervene in a manner which entails guidance and direction. I do not mean compulsory, forced intervention so that the doors to the universities will be closed in the case of the humane and social sciences, for example, and we will restrict admission to medical, engineering and various technical sciences, because that would entail a very great injustice from the cultural standpoint and in terms of needs.

As regards disguised unemployment among graduates of humane and social science faculties, where there are large numbers of people at work although they are an unproductive force, there may be some validity to that.

However, the nature of the coming period will require a sort of reduction in jobs for graduates of humane faculties and an increase in vocational, technical, agricultural, engineering and medical training areas. All this will come with time.

Faculties Open and There Are No "Jobs" For Their Graduates

[Question] What is your opinion on the point that some new faculties were opened, after which it was proved that there was no need for their areas of specialization and therefore jobs were not available for their graduates, as was the situation in the case of the female graduates of the Economics and Management Faculty at King 'Abd-al-'Aziz University in Jiddah, where the Employment Bureau had to apologize to them because it had no jobs? How can we avoid that sort of situation in the future?

[Answer] This is a good question and an important one. Therefore I would like to state that there is constant, integrated coordination between the ministry and the Civil Service Bureau regarding the kingdom's actual needs for jobs in the case of male and female graduates. There is a committee which is headed by his excellency the minister of higher education in which all university vice presidents and the deputy minister of higher education are present, in which we are constantly studying this matter to strike a balance between the desired numbers in the necessary specializations at the expense of the unnecessary ones. This is a dynamic matter and it is not connected to a specific time.

As regards the situation with graduates of faculties who cannot find jobs, this was a correct statement 4 or 5 years ago, but the situation now has become totally different since efforts are being made at the highest level to determine types of jobs for Saudi women in a manner that will be in keeping with the traditions and beliefs of the society. As you know, the Manpower Council is very concerned with this, and it has [done] research and study on this matter.

However, if a difficulty or shortage in the appointment of female graduates appears in a given year in some areas of specialization, this is a tentative, temporary issue, because the basis of things is that all the qualified capable people in this country should be enabled to serve it, whether they are young women or young men.

Eliminate "Guardianship" over Saudi Girls

[Question] Since we have been talking about "Saudi women," has the education plan been completed as far as they are concerned, in your opinion? What is your notion concerning their job fields?

[Answer] In my personal view, Saudi women, being Moslems, are living in a society which is governed by Islamic belief, and their role must be given a sound new formulation devoid of excess or extremism, a balanced, realistic view which takes account of the upsurge in civilization which the kingdom is experiencing in all areas. I consider that Saudi women's first and basic job is "motherhood," by virtue of their nature. This is the comprehensive, general, complete task for all women in the world, not just Saudi women. Although we have emphasized that to them, because we need to have them play their role most effectively and with the maximum possible performance in raising generations and giving them special care so that we can build our country up on clear Islamic premises, as regards other jobs, which are peripheral when compared to "motherhood," there is no doubt that Saudi women have received their absolute share of education in all fields of specialization which are in keeping with biological makeup and the premises and belief of the society, and they now have the maturity to have a role and be heard in determining the type of work they want. Therefore, we must eliminate guardianship over Saudi girls, because we are absolutely confident of their academic and cultural maturity and their ability to determine what they want, because they are the daughters and the products of this society, since everyone who has talked about women's work so far and has specified the jobs they can have is "a man;" I have not heard a woman talking forthrightly and objectively about what she feels and needs in determining her type of job and the work she should do.

Saudi Girls — Computer Workers

[Question] Do you believe that the areas of specialization Saudi women are working in now are adequate or do you have a new view on this subject?

[Answer] When I talk about this matter, I talk from a purely personal point of view; one could bear in mind that there is interest at a high level to determine the areas in which women should work. I can say most clearly that the area in which I would like to see Saudi girls work is the computer, that is, electronics, and the advanced information cycle. That is an area in which women can achieve brilliant success, because it requires precision and fine fingernails which are able to deal with delicate, sensitive equipment that requires patience. Women have all of these qualities. This area of activity also does not demand working with men in any way. Thus young Saudi women can serve their society as they should.

Are Our Curricula in the Humane Sciences Transmitted Verbatim from the West?

[Question] Is it true that curricula are being studied in the universities of the Arab nation that have been transmitted from the West, although no changes or modifications have been made in them that are in keeping with

this nation's environment and circumstances, indeed are considered above the level of the Arab student, and that this applies to our Saudi universities and Saudi students?

[Answer] Whoever told you that curricula in the humane specializations and the social sciences in the Arab world have been "imported" did not state the whole truth: they have been "transmitted verbatim," word by word. We uprooted the tree of Western civilization in the humane and social sciences from its own soil and planted it by force in soil where it is not capable of growing. We have continued to "know our place" and are now snatching up what is thrown to us from the West, bringing it in and putting it in our curricula without having any innovative realistic things to add that come from our own spirits as Arabs and Moslems with our own particular humane and social sciences. I hope that this statement will not distress the reader, because it is realistic, and only a self-important or deceived person can deny it.

As far as we in Saudi Arabia go, I cannot deny that ours is not very different from the situation in the Arab world. Perhaps our situation is better than everyone's because of the need we feel to exert efforts to amend the humane and social curricula and clean them up. This is the beginning of the road, but it is not enough.

In this country, the time has come for us to underline our leadership role in amending these curricula, because we are the most promising in terms of location, sacred attributes, origins, resources and abilities. In addition to this there are Saudi universities which are specialized in Islamic sciences and the Arabic language which require a very great impetus in the form of the development of humane and social science curricula so that they can correct the condition of these sciences in the other universities of the kingdom. Here I hold these universities absolutely responsible for leading the amendment process.

The Westerner Complex

[Question] What are the psychological and social dimensions of the lack of "confidence" Saudi graduates suffer from, especially in such academic areas as medicine, engineering and so forth?

[Answer] The society's acceptance of capable domestic persons is basically linked to the stage of civilization it is going through. We have for a long time remained prisoners of the "westerner complex"—not just us, but most Arab countries. That is a cultural invasion, not just in material things but also in ideas. It is a fascination with Western civilization that will remain with us for some time as a psychological state which dominates people's minds, where they imagine that there are no capable domestic people who can measure up to foreigners in terms of performance and competence. While this phenomenon has been ingrained in some people for a long time, I am confident that it will rapidly end in the kingdom, to the extent that we progress and capable and competent domestic people rise competent, able citizens. I hope that my statement will not be construed as a call for introversion and the failure to seek the aid of fraternal and foreign experts and capable persons, because that would mean isolation and the closing of doors to the foreign world. We do not want 100 percent Saudization because that is a kind of fantasy, since we are in need of many diverse capabilities which will help the development, and contact with it gives birth to expertise, development and progress.

We Suffer from "Technical" Cultural Backwardness!

[Question] How, then, do you explain that foreigners have established such giant projects in the Kingdom as industrial cities, airports, desalination plants and so forth, although there are equally competent Saudis?

[Answer] I believe that it took very high degrees of competence along with extensive expertise to carry out these massive projects. It is not wrong for us to build an airport such as King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh with the aid of foreign experts from outside the country. Rather, it is wholly wrong that I should seek the aid of these foreign experts, make fantastic expenditures on them, and not allow domestic Saudi manpower to train to work in this area.

The issue, then, is "training and study," so that citizens can catch up to the cavalcade of development in terms of training, knowledge, experience, understanding, perception and participation, so that it will not become a question of establishing massive projects which we cannot manage, operate and maintain.

In my opinion, what is being done in the country is based on this principle, "training and study." Therefore, we see a stipulation in all contracts which are given to foreign bodies which compels these bodies to train Saudis in various areas of work, so that a day will come in which we can be fully certain that we will be able to manage such massive projects and operate and maintain them by ourselves.

The psychological dimension of this issue is embodied in the "technical" cultural backwardness which our society, and other Arab societies, have suffered from, which has left residues in our spirits, because we are not able to operate or maintain such projects. This is a phenomenon which I hope will be "temporary," so that we can surge past it and leave behind the absolute fascination with the material civilization of the West.

We are Pleased with "Their Loathing" of the Equivalency Committee

[Question] Some people who have obtained academic certificates from universities abroad complain that the Ministry of Higher Education does not recognize these certificates. Is it true that there is intense loathing of what is called the "Equivalence Committee" in the ministry?

[Answer] Let us take, for example, America, where there are thousands of universities which consider that the federal government in Washington does not have legislative and executive power over education and the level of education in the states but that this is connected to local governments. It is well known that local governments have special legislation which is in keeping with their conditions and circumstances. For example, the state of Illinois is considered one of the most difficult and complex states in terms of not permitting any body, institution or person to open an institute, university or scholarly institution until it goes through a very precise series of choices, review of curricula and level, and so forth. Totally to

the contrary, the state of California is the easiest state in giving scope to education, institutes and new universities. Therefore it is clear that education in America must be measured not by a single standard but rather by numerous ones. There are seven regional organizations which are concerned with recognizing the various universities and institutes in America and exchanging recognition among them. We in the Equivalency Committee in the ministry rely on these seven regional organizations. We also rely on the occupational organizations which recognize the vocational dimension of the programs followed in the universities. If the two recognitions are made, we will not in any case reject an academic degree. If one recognition is made, that is not enough; that is our criterion in recognizing academic degrees from America. Yes, we have rejected academic degrees in the form of doctorates, masters' degrees and bachelors' degrees issued by universities in the West and some European countries because they were not up to the requisite academic level that we want to maintain.

The danger lies in accepting these kinds of degrees, not in rejecting them, because that would mean a flood of young Saudis educated abroad who are not academically qualified to be given leadership positions up to the decisionmaking level and who are not qualified for that. The result would be a disaster for the country, and, although I know that the Equivalency Committee is not loved by all, we are pleased with that outcome, because, if it had been loved, we would have had doubts about our work and our methods. This phenomenon gives a good indication that we are working, examining and probing before giving agreement to any academic degree.

[Question] Is it true that many of our Saudi universities graduate clerical red-tape employees but do not graduate researchers, thinkers and scholars?

[Answer] At the outset the question might seem embarrassing to me, but I will rise far above embarrassment and reply, with the utmost scholarly honesty and objectivity, "Yes regarding some of our Saudi universities, which are many, and no regarding some others, which are few." I do not want to name the specific universities and specify the quality of their graduates. We "find fault" with this level of graduate, because the country needs graduates who are able to use their ideas before using their knowledge in solving the problems they face, or use their ideas and their knowledge together in absolute harmony and mutual understanding. Here I might recall a statement by Confucius, who said, "A student who learns without thinking is nothing and a student who thinks without learning is a threat." In addition, we do not complain because some of our universities graduate "quantity" and not "quality." Why? Because the stage of development and advancement we are going through has needed, and still does need, this amount of graduates. However, we do not have an excuse or justification before God or ourselves to graduate skilled "clerks" for the country who are able to use what they know while their minds are unused. Anyone who seeks an excuse or justifications to explain the deficiency that exists in the level and quality of graduates should be considered inadequate and unable to understand the stage the country is going through. Therefore a review must be made in the coming period, in radical fashion, of the curricula and plans of higher education in the kingdom, and I hope that the day in which we will be able to graduate thinking young Saudis who are able to innovate will come.

The Academic Degrees Which pour into Us from Abroad Are Trivial and Superficial!

[Question] The following has been observed about higher studies in the kingdom!

1. The shallowness of the quality of masters' theses, which deal with trivial subjects or are repititious and which society does not benefit from.
2. Registration with male or female supervisors whose contracts are about to end.
3. The inexperience of some Saudi professors supervising masters' theses.

What is your comment on these observations?

[Answer] First of all, I can assure you that there are no trivial superficial masters' theses in universities that are connected to the Ministry of Higher Education. If they exist in other faculties which are not subordinate to the ministry, I do not know about them and cannot talk about them negatively or positively. However, this poor quality of masters' theses is conspicuous among Saudi students who have been educated abroad and choose subjects which do not bring quality, importance or benefit to their society. The problem with these theses is all the greater because the supervisors are not Saudis and are ignorant of almost everything about the kingdom, and therefore their judgment is not accurate, because they rely on the student and what he says. Can you imagine that we read a master's thesis which a university issued -- there is no need to name the country in which it was issued -- where the student wrote ridiculous, trivial things about Islamic beliefs, for which he was to be rebuked, writing about "hello" and what it means in English, "how are you" and what that means in English, and other inaccurate trivial things, for which, all in all, he received a master's degree! There is no doubt therefore that it is the responsibility of the student who studies abroad and the extent of his respect for the actual facts and correct, sound information he writes about his country. Therefore, it is not possible for us to hold the foreign university absolutely responsible, although it has shared in the responsibility. I agree with you that we can find such triviality, superficiality and distortions of actual conditions in the kingdom in many academic degrees which pour into us from universities abroad.

Second, regarding registration with male or female supervisors whose contracts are about to end, these are cases that are anticipated, and they might arise because of one circumstance or another. They are not a general phenomenon but exceptional cases which occur in specific circumstances.

Third, on the inexperience of some Saudi professors supervising masters' theses, if this is true it is wrong and must be stopped, because supervision of master's and higher studies requires expertise, maturity and seasoning. In my personal belief, young Saudis who obtain doctorates and go back as members of faculties are not able in the first year to supervise masters' or doctorates. However, after they have been there, 2 or 3 years, they can reach a stage which will qualify them to supervise the master's. As for doctorates, it is necessary that they have performed more than 6 scientific research works besides the research for the doctorate in order to be qualified to supervise doctoral theses.

Coordination among Saudi Universities Does Not Yet Measure up to Our Aspirations

[Question] Is it true that there is no coordination and cooperation among the various Saudi universities? Why not?

[Answer] We must admit, most frankly and boldly, that coordination among Saudi universities in the Ministry of Higher Education or the seven Saudi universities has not yet measured up to our aspirations. By acknowledging this fact, I do not mean that there is no coordination, because the secretariat general of the Higher Council of Universities, which existed before the Ministry of Higher Education did, is active in this cooperation and coordination, has held a number of symposiums to exchange views and consultation among the faculty members in various universities and has brought out a number of recommendations which have all been carried out. Most unfortunately, these symposiums have not continued. In the secretariat general there are committees which contain deans of similar faculties who meet periodically to discuss the issues that concern them and coordinate among themselves, and the secretariat works to carry out what they come up with.

Do not forget that we are talking about seven universities which have their own "intrinsic independence" and are not schools. Therefore, talk about cooperation and coordination among universities must remain within the framework of this intrinsic independence the government has granted and the ministry is concerned about.

Each university has its own academic council which adopts decisions, be they administrative or academic. By coordination we mean the realization of the public interest, without conflicting with decisions issued by the legislative or executive assemblies that are present in each of the universities. Our aspirations for coordination among the seven universities is that we all work as an integrated, interconnected unit and derive absolute benefit from one another. That is our aspiration, but we have not yet attained it.

We Have Imported "Wastebaskets" But Have Not Imported Their Significance With Them!

[Question] In most of your answers to questions, especially when a certain negative point is mentioned and what the justification for it is, it has been observed that you state that it is a "temporary, tentative" matter. What does the word "tentative" mean?

[Answer] I have indeed noticed the repeated use of the word "tentative" in most of my answers. My use of this word is objective and proper and I have absolute conviction in it, because I, as a citizen of this country which is going through a tremendous stage of development and progress, feel that what we are going through are changes which have not yet reached the stage of a full stabilization of civilization. Here I mean a "technical not intellectual" civilization. We are rich in ideas.

What I aspire to is what the Algerian Moslem philosopher, thinker and writer Malik ibn Nabi aspired to before me. He made a comparison between Moslem society and Japanese society in the area of technical development and said, in essence, "We as a Moslem society have taken the position of a customer regarding Western technological civilization," that is, one who import things into his society without importing their significance along with them, while Japanese society has

taken the position regarding technological civilization of the "student" who wants to learn from it, and has indeed transferred the particular characteristics and support systems of Western technological civilization to his society and has proudly and nobly established the advancement and progress which we are familiar with today in Japanese technical civilization. Malik ibn Nabi developed this notion in the course of a visit which he and his friend made to an Arab city in the fifties, observing in the streets and squares imported wastebaskets with nice shapes and bright colors, surrounded on all sides by refuse on the ground, while the baskets themselves were empty! He became amazed at that and told his friend, "Look as I have -- we have imported wastebaskets and have not imported their significance along with them."

One should note that we find what Malik ibn Nabi mentioned here, interacting and alive in our various Islamic societies and still in being in our presence. Therefore we must not import the thing alone, but must also import its significance along with it.

Therefore, my use of the word "tentative" is an expression involving the technical civilization only: I was not being diplomatic or trying to justify negative aspects and mistakes so much as I was being realistic and observant of the facts of things, as a citizen who has been educated and brought up in this good land. I know that no nation has gone through the development and progress we are going through; this is clear and obvious in the development programs we are witnessing, in which we are moving from one stage to another, and this makes it inevitable that some negative aspects will appear. This is very normal, and it means that we have not yet reached the stage of stability. As long as you are working, therefore, you will err, and this error will be corrected in the future. Therefore my use of the word "tentative" is realistic and logical. This is my personal opinion in any case.

11887

CSO: 4404/623

SYRIA

BRIEFS

CYPRIOT-SYRIAN RELATIONS--Diplomatic sources say that a significant improvement has come over Cypriot-Syrian relations recently. This improvement was suggested by an agreement over (TRLK) class Soviet missiles concluded through Syria. Cypriot sources say that the two countries are deepening their political cooperation and in the area of security. [Text] [London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1449, 10 Aug 84 p 9] 9310

CSO:4404/648

SOVIET RED CROSS PROMISES AID TO FLOOD VICTIMS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 22 Aug 84 p 1

[Text] The three-member delegation of the Bangladesh Red Cross Society which visited the Alliance of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society of the Soviet Union returned to Dhaka on Monday, says BSS.

The delegation led by the Vice-Chairman of the Bangladesh Red Cross Society, Mr. Mohammad Maizuddin, included Mr. Tauhidur Rahman and Alhaj A. K. M. Siddiqur Rahman, members of the Managing Board of the BDRCS. The delegation visited the headquarters of the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent Society and Red Cross units of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic where they were apprised of the health protection system, life, labour and culture of the Soviet people. Official talks were held between the leaders of the two societies. The talks were led by Mr. Mohammad Maizuddin, and Mr. A. F. Reshetov, Vice-Chairman of the Alliance of Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent Society.

A joint statement issued after the talks said that in the present global situation International Red Cross must reinforce its actions in the struggle for safeguarding peace in the world and halt in arms race to secure social and economic progress of the mankind.

A Red Cross source said in Dhaka on Tuesday that the Soviet Red Cross had offered two scholarships in higher educational establishment of medicine in the USSR in 1986-1987 for Bangladesh Red Cross.

They have assured all possible help and assistance to Bangladesh Red Cross to alleviate the sufferings of the flood victims in Bangladesh. Both the Societies exchanged various publications posters, films and other publicity materials to strengthen their mutual relations.

The joint statement said the two Societies agreed that the Red Cross should strengthen its activities in primary health care, education of people particularly of the youth in the spirit of peace and noble ideals of Red Cross.

CSO: 4600/1003

NEEDS, PROBLEMS IN TRADE WITH INDIA NOTED

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 18 Aug 84 p 5

[Editorial]

[Text] The trade agreement between Bangladesh and India is reported to have been renewed for another period of three years. Both sides agreed to extend the protocol with a view to ensuring supply of specified items for their own countries. India is expected to buy newsprint, bitumen, naptha and wet-blue leather while Bangladesh is to import coal machinery and vehicles. The arrangement is quite old and reflects the need of each of these countries for given items. The protocol however has not been extended to other items, though Bangladesh insisted on inclusion of some finished products like Zam-dani Sarees. India urged Bangladesh to export gas to the neighbouring regions and the proposal is under review.

Though it is a bilateral deal payments are made in convertible currencies. It means the entire transaction is accounted for in US dollars or British pounds. Bangladesh has to pay for each item of export in hard currency, which she earns through export. Being a resources-hungry country Bangladesh finds it difficult to pay for the imports in a given year and the trade deficit is reported to have increased over the years. Bangladesh trade deficit with India in freely convertible hard currencies stood at a 510m. U.S. dollars equivalent over the last 11 year period with however some recovery made during 1983-84. Following the Dhaka agreement the volume of bilateral trade is estimated to be double that of last year's Tk. 1328.80 million. Needless to say the trade has been not very much in Bangladesh's favour. It is time that the deficit is made up by augmenting export to India.

Bangladesh has also to look for alternative sources of funding import from India or alternate sources of supply with a view to obviating trade deficit with India. Moreover, she should negotiate with India for inclusion of more items, preferably manufactured products, in the export list. This will require a review of the list of exportable items and to link the selected ones with their demands in India. It may put Bangladesh in a competitive situation with countries which sell the same products to India. This is a big task and concerted efforts of policy makers, manufacturers and exporters are needed for augmenting export to the partner in the bilateral deal. One would also note that the partners' consent is a must for such expansion of export.

As indicated by the delegation of India the scope of expansion of export from Bangladesh is linked with a possible agreement for export of gas, which is considered as the key item. Bangladesh cannot agree to such a deal without proper assessment of the reserve and a review of the prospect of alternate use of gas. In the given situation therefore one would conclude that the volume of trade between India and Bangladesh will depend on overall review of demands for products of either of the two countries in the market of the other. An inventory of such a nature is not impossible, given the political will for expansion of the base and volume of trade, but it is a task that would need more exchange of informations.

India's effective demand for goods exported by Bangladesh may expand only if our products attain a comparable standard. This is an area of management which Bangladesh has to upgrade, before expecting to increase the volume of export. From an overview of the items included in the current list one may point out that only newsprint is a manufactured finished product. Other items like naptha and bitumen go to India both for processing and immediate consumption. The scope of attaining a better deal through managerial and other forms of efficiency has to be enlarged in case of these items.

While Bangladesh has to exploit its own export potential with India by using its best available expertise, it has at the same time to insist on the strict working out of the trade protocol. Promises and commitments made in an agreement have to be lived up to by both parties in the pact. In this regard the Indian side leaves much to be desired.

CSO: 4600/1001

PARTIES REACT TO EXPLOSIONS DURING HASINA SPEECH

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 18 Aug 84 p 1

[Text] The 15 party alliance in a statement issued yesterday said, again a life had been lost in the public meeting due to an incident arising out of explosions. The incident occurred at the dead end of the public meeting when Sheikh Hasina was winding up her address. A person was beaten to death and three press photographers were subjected to mass beating.

The 15 party alleged that the entire thing was within the knowledge of the administration and it was a planned conspiracy to foil the efforts for democratic transition of the country.

The alliance condemned the incident of the explosions in the public meeting and asked the Government to stop the recurrence of such incident, in future.

The alliance expressed its utmost grief at the incident and said taking law at one's own hand will jeopardise the democratic movement in the country.

CPB

The CPB (Communist Party of Bangladesh) in a statement while condemning the bomb-throwing incident at AL meeting at Baitul Mukarram alleged the bomb throwers have some specific purpose in their mind. The CPB Called upon the people to wage united movement to resist the undemocratic force. They asked the Government to unearth the mystery behind it and arrest the persons responsible for it.

They expressed its sorrow over the incident of mass beating and said nobody should take law at his own hand.

CSO: 4600/1002

JAMA'AT LEADER TELLS PARTY DEMANDS, PROGRAM

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 28 Aug 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] The acting chief of Jamaat-e-Islami, Mr. Abbas Ali Khan, yesterday strongly demanded resignation of the government and formation of a non-political caretaker government with the Chief Justice of the country as its chief with a view to holding a free and fair elections, reports BSS.

The Jamaat chief also announced his party's programme in support of its demands and gave an ultimatum to the government to "resign within September 20."

Unless these demands are realised, Mr. Khan told a big rally at the Fulbaria bus terminal here, the supporters of Jamaat-e-Islami would launch a vigorous mass-movement against the government.

Mr. Khan also demanded the resignation of the entire political cabinet colleagues by September 20 if the President wants to contest the coming presidential poll. He also announced that his party would hold week-long protest rallies and demonstrations from September 21 to 27 unless their demands are met. The Jamaat chief also called a countrywide hartal on September 27 in support of their demands.

Presided over by Mr. Ali Ahsan at Mujahidi, President of the city unit of the party, the meeting was addressed, among others, by the Vice-President of the party, Mr. Shamsur Rahman, Joint Secretary, Prof. Yusuf Ali, Publicity Secretary, Mr. Kamaruzzaman and General Secretary of the city unit, Mr. Abdul Kader Mollah.

Mr. Abbas Ali Khan alleged that the government has "totally failed" to lead the country in the right direction. He alleged that the country's economy is rapidly proceeding towards ruination. He also accused the government of encouraging rampant corruption and smuggling.

Prof Yusuf Ali said that the overwhelming success of the hartal virtually disapproved the legitimacy of the government, he said that if the government does not resign within the dateline, the Jamaat-e-Islami would launch a vigorous movement throughout the country.

Earlier, announcing the declaration of the rally, the party thanked the people of the country for observing the peaceful hartal. The declaraton said that the hartal proved that the people of the country were in favour of the democratic rule and no longer wanted a military government.

The declaration also expressed its determination to continue the struggle for restoration of democracy. It also strongly criticised the formation of Janadal government by recruiting the corrupt and power-mongering elements.

CSO: 4600/1010

15-PARTY ALLIANCE LEADERS MEET, RESOLUTION REPORTED

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 30 Aug 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] The 15-Party alliance yesterday accused the government of scheming to hold on to power by prolonging Martial Law instead of transferring power to the people's representatives through election on the basis of 5-point demand.

The alliance alleged that with this end in mind the ruling circles and their minions were involved in disseminating misleading propaganda and confusion to push the country towards a state of uncertainty, unrest and confrontation.

The allegation was made in a resolution of the meeting of central leaders of the 15-Party alliance held in the central office of JSD with Mirza Sultan Raja in the chair.

The alliance deplored that the government had not yet accepted its demands for withdrawal of Martial Law, holding of election to a sovereign parliament under a non-party government, restoration of fundamental rights, release of political detainees and convicts, lowering of essentials' prices, providing adequate relief to the flood victims and resistance to emerging famine.

It claimed that the observance of peaceful hartal on Tuesday all over the country in spite of misleading propaganda, attacks, intimidation and conspiracy had reflected the people's verdict in favour of the 5-point demands.

In the resolution the alliance further said that the Prime Minister of the present government, Ataur Rahman Khan, Minister Mahbubur Rahman and Adviser Barrister Yusuf and others had begun to shed tears for democracy and launched a campaign of vilification against the 15-Party alliance.

Reacting to a remark that there was no election in the past held under a non-party govt the 15-Party alliance said that the government might not know about the holding of election under a neutral government, but the people did not forget that the Yahya government had held election under a non-party government in 1970. Besides, in 1973 an elected government gave election, although it was not non-partisan.

According to the alliance, it is a rare precedence that a government which had usurped power had been trying to legitimize it by raising a political party from the power structure and holding a farce election.

The alliance was critical of Mr Ataur Rahman Khan for creating a state of confusion afresh by digging up the state issue of presidential election. The alliance reminded him that he was a signatory to the 5-point demand which articulately mentioned that only the elected sovereign parliament would decide the final decision on the presidential election.

In the relevant resolution the alliance said that in last 19 months three "historic hartals" had been observed peacefully as a democratic means of peaceful movement and in the hartals the people had given their verdict in favour of the 5-point demand. Its immediate acceptance by the government proves its sincere willingness to hold fair election.

It called upon the people to complete all preparation for observance of dawn-to-dusk hartal on September 27 for holding election to a sovereign parliament under a non-party government and overcoming the crisis plaguing the people.

The alliance congratulated the people for making a success the half-day hartal on Tuesday all over the country in spite of all sorts of provocation.

It resented the continuation of monopolistic grip of the government on the radio and television in spite of demonstration by the students. The alliance demanded an end to dissemination of "distorted news" and news relating to the Janadal.

"The alliance alleged that different bahinis" had been created under the protective shield of the government-backed party and those were involved in anti-social activities. He referred to the case of killing of a police constable by members of such bahinis.

The alliance demanded adequate compensation for the death of the constable, trial of the culprits and adequate measures for security of the people.

The alliance in a resolution protested against repression in different parts of the country including Dhaka city and Tangail. The resolution demanded immediate release of those who were arrested in connection with the hartal on Tuesday.

CSO: 4600/1011

MUSLIM LEAGUE LEADER OFFERS TO JOIN OPPOSITION

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 3 Sep 84 pp 1, 10

[Text] Mr. Justice P.A. Siddiki President of Bangladesh Muslim League (SIDDIKI) offered to link his party with 15 and seven-party alliances for launching a united movement against the undemocratic forces who are determined to come to power by rigging the elections.

Speaking at a public meeting held at Baitul Mukarram Square on Sunday the Muslim League chief pressed for the dissolution of Janadal Ministry within next 15 days in order to hold an impartial election. He called for forming a neutral government.

Presided over by Mr. Justice B A Siddiki President of Bangladesh Muslim League (B.M.L) the meeting was addressed, among others by Mr A N. M. Yusuf Senior Vice-President Mr G A Khan Vice-President Sveda Razia Faiz Secretary General of the party Hazi M[d] Abdul Hannan Organising Secretary; Mr Atiqul Islam Cultural Secretary Mr Zakir Hos sain Convenor Juba Muslim League Mr Mohammad Hossain General Secretary City Muslim League Mr. Israhim Hossain and Mr. Tajul Islam Khan.

The B M.L. Chief described the present government as anti-people In this context he said that the present government had betrayed the cause of the people.

In her speech Sveda Razin Faiz said that country was now passing through critical situations She opined that the country had turned into a depot of corruption. She observed that the autocratic rule of the present government would come to an end through the movement of the democratic minded people.

She demanded formation of an all-party government to face the manifold problems of the country

CSO: 4600/1012

PAPERS REPORT REACTION TO ERSHAD VOA INTERVIEW

Jama'at Islami Leader's Remarks

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 2 Sep 84 p 1

[Text] Mr. Abbas Ali Khan, Acting Amir of Jamaate Islami expressed concern over and surprise at the interview of President Ershad broadcast over Voice of America on Saturday night. He said that it is not clear as to what President Ershad wanted to mean by saying that Presidential elections will be held just after parliamentary election. It transpired from the said interview that presidential election will be held a week after the parliamentary election. The Jamaat leader said that it means that President Ershad expressed his obstinacy to go ahead with his political programme ignoring the just demands of the Opposition.

He further said that if the demands for dissolution of Janadal Ministry, holding of election under a neutral interim government and to hold Presidential election after announcement of results of parliamentary election are not accepted by September 20, movement to achieve these demands will continue.

15-Party Alliance Resolution

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 4 Sep 84 p 1

[Text] The 15-party Alliance in resolution adopted at its meeting on Sunday expressed its deep concern over the deteriorating law and order situation. It felt that anti-social elements within the political organisations formed under the patronage of the government, were responsible for the deteriorating law and order situation which had endangered public safety and security of individual life.

The Alliance took strong exception to the interview given to the Voice of America by President Ershad and observed that the interview had unmasked the "designs of the government". The 5-point demand endorsed by the people have reference only to parliamentary election and there is no mention of the presidential election which General Ershad in his interview with the Voice of America has announced to hold after the parliamentary election, it said.

In another resolution, the Alliance urged the people to observe complete hartal throughout the country on September 27 to realise the five-point demand.

Meanwhile the seven-party Alliance expressed on Monday its strong resentment over the interview of President and Chief Martial Law Administrator Lt. General H. M. Ershad, broadcast by Voice of American on Saturday night.

In a statement issued to the Press, the Alliance noted that the President's disclosure and the government's programme for holding presidential election immediately after the parliamentary election reflected what it termed the design on the part General Ershad to perpetuate himself in power.

The Alliance reiterated its demand for the withdrawal of the Martial Law and holding of parliamentary elections under a neutral government. It urged the people to strengthen the democratic movement to realise the five-point demands.

CSO: 4600/1012

ERSHAD SPEAKS ON ELECTIONS AT PUBLIC MEETING

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 4 Sep 84 pp 1, 10

[Text] COX'S BAZAR, Sept 3--The President and Chief Martial Law Administrator, Lt. Gen. H. M. Ershad today said that the forthcoming elections would be free, fair and impartial aimed at establishing an elected Parliament and government, reports BSS

There will be no deviation from these democratic norms nor there will be any compromise, he declared.

The President was addressing a huge public meeting at the airport maldan here. The meeting was addressed, among others by the Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Mr. Mahbuhur Rahman and the local Pourasabha Chairman, Mr. Nurul Afsar.

President Ershad said that elections for getting a mandate from the people who were the sovereign was a recognised democratic method for electing a government in any democracy. Any movement or agitation for delaying elections would be tantamount to the denial of democracy, he asserted.

President Ershad said in fulfilment of his government pledges and sincerity of purpose, he announced the holding of general elections first of all before anybody had demanded for that. But as democracy called for mutual respect, tolerance, accommodation and adjustment, the elections schedule was shifted following talks with the political leaders, he said adding: "as there is no alternative to elections for eliciting peoples' mandate for an elected government, I appeal to the political parties to refrain from anti-democratic and negative politics and participate in the coming elections".

The President said that if elections were delayed, 'our sincere desire to lift Martial Law and establish a democratic government will be hampered.' In this context, he said, the major political parties should not be haunted by their past elections memories when they were in power, rather, they should seek confidence of the people through elections instead of opposing them.

He said that those who posed themselves to be the champions of democracy should work together with the government for smooth transition to democracy.

President Ershad said that the people of the country shed their blood and sacrificed much for achieving independence of their motherland to establish a society free from exploitation and deprivation. But he added their aspirations were nipped in the bud due to plunders of the past governments.

He said, moreover, Bangladesh being burdened with population pressure and having very limited resources could not take fancy in pursuing politics of negation and destruction. Let us not multiply our miseries, let us try to minimise it working hand in hand and at the same time upholding democratic norms of mutual respect for each other and tolerance, he said and added: 'I have accommodated and adjusted the views and opinions of the opposition political parties to maximum extent and it is now the turn of the opposition to reciprocate. Otherwise, he pointed out these parties would be responsible for delaying the process of democratisation.

The President said that politics of violence, destruction of public properties, dislocation and disruption of public life did not suit the politics of a free country like Bangladesh. Rather, such negative trend would seriously affect the people and create obstacle on the way to the country's progressive march, he added.

Commonmen's Welfare Aimed At

President Ershad categorically said that all the programmes and activities of his government were aimed at achieving welfare of the commonmen and creating a welfare-oriented society ending exploitation and oppression on the people with that end in view, the government had adopted and implemented epochmaking programmes in socio-economic and administrative fields to achieve effective development at the grass root level.

Amidst thunderous applause the President called for greater unity and hard efforts to build a happy and progressive society in a peaceful and disciplined atmosphere.

Turning to students, President Ershad advised them to devote to the pursuit of knowledge to build themselves as worthy citizens of the country. He cautioned them not to be misled by those who wanted to utilise them to achieve their selfish goal. Instead of indulging in politics in student life, they should acquire knowledge first so that on finishing their education they could decide their ways of life that suit them better, he said.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Mahbubur Rahman said that the 18point programme was the charter of our survival. It is a great document containing the total socio-political and economic programmes for achieving self-reliance and consolidating independence.

Strongly refuting the allegations made by some political parties that President Ershad was doing party politics with relief materials he said if proper distribution of relief materials and rehabilitations of the affected people were politics then certainly President and Janadal are engaged in it.

In the morning President Ershad visited Chittagong Cantonment and went round different units witnessing the troops in exercise. He also inaugurated the signal centre complex of the Chittagong Cantonment. The Area Commander and Zonal Martial Law Administrator Zone 'C' Major General Nuruddin Khan was present.

The president was given a hearty reception when he arrived at the Chittagong airport this morning.

CSO: 4600/1012

BNP LEADER TELLS CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN POLL

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 18 Aug 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] Begum Khaleda Zia, chief of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) said yesterday that her party would participate in the country's ensuing parliamentary election provided it was free and fair.

"A government, whose chief announced the results of the forthcoming election in advance even long before it is held can not, by any means, be impartial in holding a free and fair election," said Begum Zia referring to President and CMLA Lt. Gen. H.M. Ershad's recent public statement in which he said his party--Janadal will capture majority of the seats in the ensuing election.

The BNP chief was addressing a public meeting organised by Bangladesh Sramik Dal Adamjee branch, at Football Ground, Adamjinagar about 12 miles east of Dhaka yesterday afternoon.

The meeting was presided over by Abdul Wahed Mistri, President Sramik Dal, Adamjee branch and addressed among others by Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury, Obaidur Rahman, Barrister Abul Hasnat, S. A. Bari A. T., Moudud Ahmed, and Sramik Dal leaders Abul Khair, Abdul Mannan, Habibullah Habib. Other BNP leaders Barrister Nazmul Huda, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Bhuyan, Ahmed Nazir, Nazrul Islam, Begum Ahsanullah, Begum Shahina Khan and Begum Selina Rahman were also present on the occasion.

Reiterating their precondition for going to election, Begum Zia demanded withdrawal of martial law, restoration of basic rights, and creation of congenial atmosphere in the country before the election. A free and fair election can not be expected from a government under martial law, she said.

Begum Zia bitterly criticised the government for what she called the indifference of the government towards the pressing needs of the country when it was confronted with economic and political crises and devastating flood.

"Relief funds," she said, "is being used for organising Janadal instead of helping the flood victims. She demanded proper distribution of relief materials among the destitutes all over the country.

Begum Zia alleged that student, political and labour leaders and workers were being subject to coercion. She called for an end to arrests of and torture on student, political and labour leaders and workers.

She observed, 'oppressive measures would not come to a halt untill this illegal government is overthrown and a democratic one is restored.'

Recalling her involvement in politics she said sufferings of students, workers and others had drawn her into politics and added 'I will remain with them'.

Giving a clarion call to make the half day hartal on August 27, a success, the BNP leader said, 'You liberated the country through a movement and this time you will have to express no-confidence against the present government through another movement--the movement for restoration of democracy and basic rights of the people.' She also urged them to observe the day peacefully and not to be provoked by any circle.

Referring to the government's decision to observe 'democracy day' on the same day she said government was trying to create law and order situation by observing the day simultaneously. The government will have to bear the responsibility if anything happens untoward on that day, she warned.

She also slashed the government for using the radio and television for blowing their own trumpet. She demanded that all political parties be allowed to avail the electronic media facilities. She also called for broadcasting the news of the Adamjee Nagar public meeting over radio and TV.

Begum Zia termed import of suger by the government as 'suger scandal and said donations were collected from the importers for raising funds for Janadal. She demanded disclosure of the identity of the man who she called Wahab--who was lucky enough to get permit for the bulk of the import. Citing the example of sugar import she questioned, how can a man who himself indulges corruption can curb corruption? His call for waging war against corruption sounds ridiculous Begum Zia concluded.

Harbinger of Movements

The party General Secretary Dr Badruddoza termed the workers 'harbinger of all movement' and said that they would make the hartal call by the 22 party alliance on August 27 a success.

He said his party had been with the working people and would continue to be so under the leadership of Khaleda Zia.

He demanded withdrawal of martial law, dissolution of what he termed Janadal government before the country's parliamentary election was held.

Abul Hasnat, former mazor of Dhaka, said that election should be held under a non-partisan government. He alleged that those who did not support Swadhin Bangla Trade Union were subjected to oppression. He called forging unity among the working people to achieve their basic rights.

INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ESTABLISHED IN DHAKA

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 28 Aug 84 p 3

[Text] An institute of human rights and legal affairs was founded in Dhaka with Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury and Justice Abdul Malek former Judges of the Supreme Court as President and Secretary General, with a view to upholding and protecting the fundamental rights of the people as envisaged in the declaration of Human Rights Charter of the United Nations, reports BSS.

The founding of the Institute affiliated with the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Geneva, was declared in Dhaka on Sunday evening at a brief function which was presided over by Justice Chowdhury.

Dr. Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, former Vice-Chancellor of Jahan girnagar University is the Vice-President Mr Mujibul Haider Chowdhury, Managing Director, National Bank is the Treasurer, Mr Shafiqul Islam Khan a Chartered Accountant and former Controller of Finance, of the erstwhile Hotel Intercontinental is the Joint Secretary-General of the institute.

Prominent among the committee members are: Dr Aleem Al-Razee Advocate Khandaker Mah bubuddin Ahmed, Barrister K.Z Alam, former Ministers like Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar and Mr. Abdur Rahman Biswas, lawyer and retired civil servant Mr Abdur Rab Chowdhury, Dhaka University Departmental chairmen like Prof. Zahrul Islam Chowdhury (LAW), Prof. Ashra fuddin Sardar (Psychology) Prof K A M Saaduddin (Sociology) and Dr A K M Nurul Islam, M. R C.P and Director of the Metrolitan Clniic"

Earlier explaining the background of the need of founding of the institute, Justice Malek said as members of a Human Society we have to protect our fundamental rights disburse our duties to hars justice on the basis of equitability.

In his presidential speech Justice Abdun Rahman Chowdhury stressed the need of upholding the basic rights as envisaged in the Declaration of Human Rights Charger of the United Nations for which, he said we must organise ourselves.

Nobody has any right whatsoever to trample down or ignore those basic rights in a society. For the protection of those rights, rule of law must prevail without which democracy cannot be ushered in he said, adding democracy again

could take its roots where independence of judiciary existed preceded by the independence of the judges.

Justice Chhowdhury urged upon all to come forward to pursue and inculcate the struggle to ensure and protect one single individual's inalienable basic rights in an underdeveloped society like ours.

Professor Dr Zillaur Rahman Siddiqui also addressed the meeting which was conducted by Barrister K.Z Alam.

CSO: 4600/1008

RESULTS OF 1981 POPULATION CENSUS REPORTED

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 3 Sep 84 pp 1, 10

[Text] The final results of the 1981 population census, released to the Press on Sunday, show the country's population growth rate at 2.32 per cent per annum during the intercensal period of 1974-80, reflecting only a modest decline from 2.48 per cent per annum during the previous intercensal period of 1961-74.

The 1981 population, after being adjusted for net undercount in the enumerated population, stood at 89.9 million. The enumerated count under the census stood at 87.1 million of which 44.9 million persons were male and 42.2 million female.

Planning Minister Dr. A. Majeed Khan released the final results of the census, based on cent per cent processing of all the questionnaires, at a Press conference in Dhaka, Dr. A.K.M Golam Rabbani, Secretary, Statistics Division, and other senior officials of the Division, and also the members of the Planning Commission including Dr. A. Sahadatullah and Mr. Mujibur Rahman were present at the Press conference.

The important demographic characteristics of the country as revealed in the final results of the 1981 population census are:

- 1) children aged 0-4 years constitute 17.2 per cent of the total population and this 'high proportion' of child population reflects the decline in the infant and childhood mortality and moderate decline in fertility level in the recent past;
- 2) the overall sex-ratio is 106.4 i.e. there are 1064 males per 1000 females in the country. The sex-ratio for urban areas stand at 125.6 while that for rural areas at 103.3 and the high urban ratio reflects male out-migration from rural areas to urban areas;
- 3) urban population constitutes 15.2 per cent (13.2 million) and out of this 9.4 million are recorded in Pourashavas (Municipalities) and the rest in re-classified urban centres (upazila head-quarters and huts and bazars with electricity, not earlier defined as urban);

4) 46.7 per cent of the population are under age 15 years and this proportion, reflecting the young-age structure of the country's population is 1.3 per cent lower than that of 1974 census.

5) economically active persons in agriculture constitute 61.3 per cent in 1981 as against 86 per cent in 1961 census, in 1961 census, and this reflects the structural change within the economy over the last two decades;

6) the proportion of never-married females aged 15-19 years increased from 8.3 per cent in 1961 to 31.3 per cent in 1981 and similar increases had been recorded in the proportions of never-married females aged 10-14 and 20-24 years. These significant changes in the proportions of married and never-married persons in the country show the rise in the age at first marriage with its favourable impact on reducing fertility;

And (7) the religious composition of population has not changed significantly since 1974 census. Proportion of Muslim population in 1981 works out at 88.6 per cent and that of Hindu, Buddhist and Christian population are 12.1.0.6. and 0.3 respectively.

Replying to a question, the Minister said that the country's population stood at 96 million in 1984. The projected population is likely to be between 132 million and 142 million in 2000 AD according to various assumptions regarding fertility and mortalityfi he stated. He noted that the projected labour force i.e. economically active population in 2000 AD is likely to be around 46.5 million (male 44.5 million and female two million).

About the population census works in Dahagram and Angorpota enclaves, Dr. Majeed Khan said that the works could not be carried out there in the enclaves despite attempts made on three occasions by the Bangladesh officials. Dr. Rabbani told the newsmen that the population of these two enclaves would be around 26,000.

Explaining the salient features of the final census report, the Minister stated that total number of households (dwellings) in the country was 1,47,-85,000. Roof materials comprising straw bamboo constituted 59.3 per cent of housing structure, C.I. Sheet wood accounted for 35.5 per cent, cement and brick 2.8 per cent and tiles 2.4 per cent.

The broad socio-economic and occupational patterns of the population under the census showed that 53.1 per cent had access to tubewell water supply 37.5 per cent households were dependent on pond and shallow well and six per cent of households used water from river, stream and canal for drinking purposes. Only 26.2 per cent households in urban areas had access to tap water. The estimated labour force as enumerated by the census was 23.6 million of which 22.4 million persons are males and 1.2 million females. When adjusted for net undercount, the total labour force for the country stood at 24.4 per cent giving an average annual growth rate in labour force, at 1.5 per cent.

About 60 per cent of the total labour force in the country are absorbed in agriculture which includes cultivation, fishery, forestry, and livestock and 20 per cent in the road manufacturing or industrial sector (which includes transport, energy and construction).

Replying to a question about the number of landless farmers, Dr. Majeed Khan said that this figure would be available only after the agricultural census, the findings of which would be hopefully ready by December next. Dr. Rabbani, however, told the newsmen that 20 per cent of the total households in the country were without any land or homestead. Another ten per cent have homestead but no land, he added, the number of farmers with land-holdings upto one acre (three bigha) will constitute yet another twenty per cent of the total households, he stated.

About child labour, the Planning Minister said that it was difficult to give any exact figure because of 'definitional problems' relating to child labour.

Meanwhile, the information collected through 1981 population census on household industry showed that about 1.35 per cent of households were engaged in weaving, 1.54 per cent in bamboo and cane works and 0.37 per cent in pottery.

CSO: 4600/1012

BRIEFS

NEW POLITICAL PARTY--Md Ismail Hussain Talukder, a former MP on Tuesday announced the floating of a new political organisation 'Bangladesh Sabek Muslim League' with himself as its President, reports BSS. In a statement he said that his organisation would follow the ideals of the Muslim League which was founded by Sir-Salimullah in 1906. Different factions of Muslim League that cropped up for some time now had totally deviated from party's original ideals and principles, he added. He further noted that time had come when objectives and programmes of 1906 Muslim League should be evaluated and pondered over. The President of Sabek Muslim League further said that office bearers of various factions of Muslim League were fond of arm chair politics. These leaders of so-called Muslim Leagues are totally alienated from the masses as they are ignorant about their hopes and aspirations as well as their hardship and misery. They find pleasure to take recourse to high sounding rhetorics sitting tight in their cosy drawing rooms in cities and towns of Bangladesh, he said. Mr Talukder said that as full fledged executive committee of this organisation would be announced soon. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 5 Sep 84 p 10]

PRC RICE DONATION--People's Republic of China will donate 5,000 tons of rice for the flood affected people of Bangladesh, the Chinese Ambassador, Mr Xiao Xiangquin announced when he called on the President, Lt Gen H.M. Ershad at the Sena Bhavan Tuesday evening, reports BSS. The President requested the envoy to convey his thanks to the Chinese Government for the gesture. The consignment of rice will leave China for Chittagong shortly, the Ambassador said. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 5 Sep 84 p 1]

COAL, COKE IMPORT--The Government has decided to allow the private sector to import coal and hard coke under the import Policy for 1984-85. Some fund has also been made available for this purpose, an official handout said on Tuesday, reports BSS. The available fund has been reallocated to the different regional offices of the Chief Controller of Import and Exports. The genuine brick burners and recognised industrial units in the private sector have also been advised to approach their concerned licensing authority with recommendations from the concerned district office of the Department of Industries for prior permission to import coal and hard coke at official exchange rate. Meanwhile, the Chief Controller of Import and Exports has issued a public notice giving details of the procedures in respect of this import. For any other necessary information the Chief

Controller of imports and Exports may be contacted. The government hopes that private sector brick burners and industrial units would avail this opportunity and take fullest advantage of this offer. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 29 Aug 84 p 1]

CHITTAGONG HARBOUR SEDIMENT STUDY--The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will provide US dollars 93,200 for a joint project of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission and Chittagong Port Authority on "sediment study in Chittagong harbour," according to a Press release on Tuesday. Under the financial and technical assistance arrangement, services, equipment and expertise would be extended for the study. The study which will begin this winter, will take two years to complete, the Press release said. The aim of the project is to determine the direction and rate of sand movement on either side of the Karnafuli river which put obstacles in the smooth and normal navigation in the port. Almost every year the Chittagong Port Authority spent huge amount of money dredging river bed and harbour to remove navigational hurdles, the Press release said. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 5 Sep 84 p 8]

UAE AMBASSADOR--The Ambassador-Designate of the United Arab Emirates, Mr Ahmed Mohammad Ibrahim Al-Tamimi, presented his credentials to President Lt Gen H.M. Ershad at Bangladesh on Wednesday morning, reports BSS. Presenting his letter of credence, the new UAE envoy said his country valued the friendship of Bangladesh and hoped that the existing friendly relations between the two brotherly countries would be further strengthened. Reciprocating the sentiments of the new envoy, President Ershad assured him of all possible assistance during his tenure of office in Bangladesh. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 30 Aug 84 p 8]

DELEGATION TO PRC--The Bangladesh women's delegation headed by Dr Shafia Khatun, Minister for Social Welfare and Women's Affairs now visiting China attended a banquet hosted by Madame Kang Keping, Chairperson of All China Women's Federation in the Great Hall of the People at Beijing on Wednesday, says an official handout on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, Madame Kang, who is also Vice Chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative conference, expressed the hope that their visit would further strengthen the close cooperation existing between China and Bangladesh, specially between the womenfolk of two countries. Madame Kang said that Chinese women were participating in the labour force and various other public functions at a growing rate and were increasingly making contributions to the nation's socialist modernization. In reply, Dr Shafia Khatun reciprocated the sentiments expressed by Madame Kang for the people of Bangladesh, particularly of its womenfolk and said under the able leadership of President Ershad the women were now engaged in a gigantic task of achieving socio-economic emancipation to build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 29 Aug 84 p 8]

CSO: 4600/1017

FURTHER REPORTAGE ON INDIAN AIRLINER HIJACKING

Passengers Return to Delhi

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 27 Aug 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] Aug 26--Although tired after their long hours of tension when the passengers of the hijacked Boeing were flown to Delhi airport this morning, they were not so shaken as to be unable to recount their experience. They were given a rousing welcome here. The Civil Aviation Minister, Mr Khursheed Alan Khan, was there to receive them.

There were moments of anxiety, yet somehow everything worked out well in the end. All of them appreciated the manner in which the captain of the Boeing had handled the situation, and also grateful to the authorities at Dubai, who finally secured their release.

The passengers in their accounts gave the names of five of the seven hijackers as Sandhu, Shanti Bagga, Kuldeep Singh and Avtar Singh. Sandhu was the leader.

They were not so happy about the way things had gone at Lahore and Karachi. True, no discourtesy was shown to them there, but most of them felt that the authorities at those two airports did not really seem interested in working out a solution. A few passengers suspected connivance.

Mr Mandeep Sandhu, a businessman based in Chandigarh, was absolutely positive that the hijackers had obtained their pistol at Lahore airport. Having had a window seat he could see the hijackers in conversation with the Pakistani authorities, and noticed a packet being given to the hijackers. It was from this packet that they later took a pistol and 25 cartridges.

During one of the many parleys between the hijackers and the Pakistani authorities at Lahore airport, Mr Sandhu saw a number of maps and charts spread out on the runway, and something being explained in great detail to the leader of the hijackers, who called himself Sandhu, but whose name, Capt V.K. Mehta later said, was Alam Khan. Later, talking to Sandhu gathered that they were being informed of the logistics involved in taking the aircraft to the USA.

The spirit of bonhomie between the hijackers and the Pakistani authorities was very apparent, Mr Sandhu said. He saw the first hijacker who got off the aircraft in Lahore approach a Pakistani officer and touch his feet.

The hijack drama started as breakfast was being served. Suddenly there were shouts of "Jobole so Nihal" from the front. Before anyone could react, the response "Sat Sri Akali" came from the rear and six men rushed to the cockpit.

Within minutes, they had dragged out the co-pilot, Capt B.L. Ghai. They hit him and tied him with cloth borrowed from a passenger.

The aircraft circled the Golden Temple four times, while Shanti kept talking into the microphone about the "damages" inflicted by the Army, Mr Sandhu said. It was then that the passengers were told the only demand which the hijackers made--the withdrawal of the Army from the Temple.

The other hijackers, one called Avtar Singh, another Amrit Singh, and one the youngest being referred to as Kissie, paced the aisle. The passengers did not see any weapons with them.

Till the aircraft landed at Lahore, the passengers did not know where they were.

Amrik Singh had a bottle wrapped in newspaper in one hand, with a protruding wick and he said the device was a petrol bomb. In the other hand he held a camera case, which he claimed contained the switch of a time bomb, Mr Sandhu said.

At Karachi, Captain Ghai who was at the controls, brought the plane down in a very bumpy landing trying to burst a tyre.

The airport engineers said the tyres were "fine" and got the aircraft refuelled for the journey to Dubai. Food packets were given to the passengers at Karachi, but most of them did not eat as they were not sure of their next supply.

Mr Sandhu said that landing at Dubai was one of the most frightening moments of his life. The airport authorities had refused permission to land despite repeated pleas that fuel was running dangerously short, and had switched off the runway lights.

The hijackers announced that the aircraft would land in the sea. Life-jackets were not to be found on board. Finally, all the passengers were shifted to the front seats and told to hold on to a cushion each, which would help them keep afloat. Ultimately, however, the aircraft did land at darkened Dubai airport.

For six hours, the authorities at Dubai paid "absolutely no attention" to the aircraft.

Then exactly 36 hours after takeoff from Delhi, the Boeing landed at Dubai and Captain Mehta announced over the intercom that the talks had succeeded and all passengers would be released. Even then, it was another two hours before this actually happened, with the passengers forcing the issue by standing up and moving towards the open door.

Mr K. Subrahmanyam, Director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, was quite emphatic that the hijackers brandished pistols only after the plane had left Lahore. "I'm sure, so is the captain." He was one passenger whom the hijackers had, at one stage, singled out to be shot.

Mr Michael Fleming, a British national, too said the hijackers "were clearly on good terms with the Pakistani authorities." There were many others who agreed with him.

Mr Sanjiv Malik, a final year student of a medical college in Jammu, said: "We had become friendly with the hijackers and the youngest among them were talking freely to the passengers, even singing songs for them."

Parting Song by Hijacker

Aug 26--The hijacking ended on an ironic note with the youngest hijacker "Kissie" bursting into a Hindi film song asking the passengers not to cry in fond memory of the hijackers.

"Ham chhor chalen hain mehfal ko, yad aye kabhi to mat rona," (We are leaving, do not cry in our memory). "Though certainly not in the spirit of the song, there may be occasions when one might break down and pay while looking back on the trauma of the hijacking," one woman passenger remarked.

Kissie, said to be a second-year college student of Chandigarh, was singing Punjabi songs and tappas and regaling the passengers at their request when they were bored and sick of being trapped in the plane.

More on Passenger Reports

Madras THE HINDU in English 27 Aug 84 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 26--"The real tense moment in the entire ordeal came when we were told over Dubai airport that the aircraft will be ditched into the sea after hovering for about two and a half hours," said a passenger recounting how he spent the 38 hours as a hostage of pro-Khalistani hijackers.

Mr S.C. Dhanda, a Delhi lawyer, after the special flight landed at Palam this morning, said with about five minutes of fuel left in the aircraft a full "May day" operation was on inside the Boeing-737.

"All passengers were briefed on the emergency procedures and life jackets had been pulled out from under the seats and people gathered near the emergency exits," Mr Dhanda who had boarded the plane at Delhi, said.

Fuel for just three minutes: Mr Dhanda further explained saying exit ramps were prepared and the crew took up emergency positions. However, the eventuality did not arise as the plane was allowed to land at a most critical moment with fuel for just about three minutes of flight left. "It was really a touch and go affair," he said in a tone of relief.

Retaliation: Another passenger said that when they asked the hijackers to keep the airconditioning on inside the increasingly stuffy cabin they were told that this "suffering was a measure of retaliation for what the Sikhs had faced during the army action in Punjab."

One of the foreigners on board, Mr Michael Fleming, noted that the hijacking was conducted with 'weapons' mostly acquired from within the aircraft. "They didn't get much through security." The axe and the fire extinguisher among other implements were part of the aircraft's equipment.

Security lax: The security at Lahore airport, he said, was lax, with many people, including a large number of pressmen milling around the aircraft.

All the hijackers continuously went in and out of the aircraft for negotiations and were "clearly on good terms with Pakistan officials." Mr Fleming said the only information that the passengers got about the negotiations was from the captain.

Threat of death: Mr K. Subrahmanyam, Director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysts, was threatened by the hijackers that he would be shot 'dead.' He told newsmen that he did not know the reason behind the threat.

However, the cabin crew felt that the hijackers might have suspected Mr Subrahmanyam of passing on information to the authorities in Dubai when he disembarked for medication.

His family doctor in Delhi had informed the Dubai control tower to render all possible assistance since he was a diabetic. He was taken by an ambulance to the airport clinic and given insulin shots by local doctors.

Mr Subrahmanyam was released for medication by the hijackers on the condition that he would be brought back to the aircraft.

All the crew of the plane handled the crisis with admirable calm to prevent the hijackers from doing anything brash, Mr Subrahmanyam said.

Seven in number: There were seven hijackers, three of them bearded and always turbaned. Two had trimmed beard and cropped hair and were wearing the turban as and when they wanted to present themselves as Sikhs. The rest two were clean shaven, but one of them had a moustache.

Pistol from Lahore: "They got a pistol at Lahore," Mr Subrahmanyam said. "They did not wield anything which looked like a pistol before that."

At Lahore one of the hijackers had gone out to negotiate for about three quarters of an hour. He must have got the pistol from outside.

"No, it was not a toy pistol," Mr Subrahmanyam said, "because the hijackers passed it among themselves and I could see it from a foot away." The hijackers announced the pistol could fire 25 rounds and made a display of it.

The leader only said they wanted asylum in the United States. He seemed to have well planned the whole drama.

Solid food denied: The hijackers gave a lot of fluids to the passengers but denied them any solid food after breakfast. They did not allow anyone to come inside the plane even to clean it. The plane had become a garbage bin, Mr Subrahmanyam said.

However, they did not know that the Boeing could not fly to New York at a stretch. When they knew that, they started talking of a hopping flight to New York. But they could read maps, go through the pilot's manual to find out which fuel is used.

Mr Subrahmanyam suggested that marksmen skilled in karate and judo be posted in mufti in the front, middle and rear of disguised as passengers, as is done on Israeli flights.

Besides, the partition dividing the pilot's cabin should be made of stronger material so that no one can break in. It should also be locked from inside.

Handbags should be checked more carefully not to allow in inflammable material.--PTI

Report on Airport Security

Madras THE HINDU in English 27 Aug 84 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 26--The Government's failure to take any action in respect of the persisting security lacunae at airports is largely responsible for the ease with which Sikh extremists could hijack another Indian Airlines aircraft on August 24, within seven weeks of the previous incident, according to enquiries made here.

A committee under the chairmanship of Mr S. Ramamritham, former Director-General of Civil Aviation, to enquire into the crash-landing of an Indian Airlines Boeing 737 in Madras at the end of its flight from Trivandrum on April 26, 1979, came to the conclusion that an explosive device had been secreted to the forward toilet of the aircraft. In its report, the committee drew the attention of the Government to the tightening of the security structure at airports to ensure against the depredations of both hijackers and saboteurs.

Central agency suggested

Expressing its dissatisfaction over the abject dependence of both the Department of Civil Aviation and the Airlines for their security requirements on the services of police personnel provided by the State Governments, the committee recommended the immediate creation of a Central civil aviation security agency under the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation.

Pointing out that State police personnel entrusted with the task of airport security were of poor calibre, the committee also drew attention to the definite possibility of even metal detectors installed at airports failing to detect the concealment of explosive devices by hijackers. Its report mentioned that while previously the containers of explosive devices were almost wholly metallic, the latest breed of such devices could be housed in non-metallic containers which escape detection.

The committee, therefore, recommended that the Central civil aviation security agency should be an integrated and an expert unit consisting of fully trained personnel entrusted not merely with physical frisking of passengers but almost exercising effective surveillance at all entry and exit points of the major airports and also over aircraft due to take off.

The present security arrangements did not provide for such overall-surveillance since the State police personnel were not equipped for this kind of job. The committee also recommended that the security agency should have explosive experts and the Department should not depend upon the Chief Controller of Explosives who is under the jurisdiction of another Department and whose expertise related only to industrial explosives.

The committee also drew attention to the hazards of the Civil Aviation Department and the Airlines having to depend on this official and his personnel when their services were badly needed for detecting an explosive device and defusing it in time.

Fears proved right

The fears expressed by the committee were proved right from the lack of urgency shown by the Chief Controller of Explosives in Madras resulting in a major tragedy. The Ramamritham Committee recommended that the experts drawn from the different disciplines and entrusted with security responsibilities in the proposed Central civil aviation security agency should be stationed in the major airports on round-the-clock shifts so that no time was lost in seeking them out during emergencies.

The committee also expressed its dissatisfaction with the ineffectiveness of the functions exercised by the Additional Director General of Civil Aviation in charge of security. Though this was a senior position, he was no authority to provide a fool-proof security structure at airports and his job was mainly that of communicating the "standards" of security requirements and also to alert airport authorities on security to be provided for visiting foreign dignitaries.

Poor skills

Though the committee did not specifically mention it in its report, it also drew the attention of the Government to the other aspect relating to the poor skills of State police personnel, many of whom were just literate in detecting potential hijackers before they boarded the aircraft. A well-trained security man would be better able to spot a hijacker from his demeanour before boarding an aircraft.

The Government took no action on the recommendations of the Ramamritham committee and the airports and aircraft, therefore, continued to be at the mercy of hijackers.

Annoyance with Pakistan

Madras THE HINDU in English 27 Aug 84 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text] New Delhi, Aug 26--The Government of India is understandably quite sore over the unhelpful way Pakistan chose to handle the latest hijacking, although it has no intention of making an issue of this to the extent of souring bilateral relations that are at a low ebb in any case.

The Pakistan authorities kept up a pretence of doing everything to secure the release of the passengers and the aircraft, but they were clearly sulking this time, smarting with the feeling that India was not appreciative enough of what was done on the last such occasion.

Though they went through the motions of seeming to persuade the hijackers to surrender, the Pakistani negotiators kept India in the dark of what exactly transpired during the sham negotiations with them. The hijacked aircraft was refuelled and allowed to take off, both from Lahore and Karachi, against India's request to prevent the plane from proceeding.

Once again the Indian officials present in Lahore and Karachi were not kept informed of the progress of the negotiations, nor was the core group in Delhi which was in constant touch with Islamabad over the hotline given any indication of how they were being dealt with at the two airports. But there are no hard feelings in Delhi over what happened, since the Government of India did not expect anything better this time.

Helpful U.S. attitude: There is, however, appreciation in high Government circles over the helpful attitude of the U.S. Embassy in Delhi, which has been in constant touch with both Dubai and Washington trying to evolve some acceptable procedure, with India's concurrence, for persuading the hijackers through the UAE authorities to surrender after freeing the passengers and the aircraft. The whole exercise was designed to gain time by letting the hijackers imagine that, after a brief detention in Dubai, they might proceed to the U.S.

The U.S. State Department had told both India and the UAE that the American laws on hijacking were tough and that it would be mandatory to arrest the hijackers as soon as they set foot on U.S. soil and send them to the country where the offence had occurred, to stand trial for their criminal action. But in the course of the hurried consultations last night, the door was left open to allow the hijackers to go to some other country if it was not possible for the UAE authorities to send them back.

UAE reluctance: Despite repeated 'SOS' messages from Delhi that the plane might be running out of fuel as it kept circling over Dubai, the UAE authorities refused to let it land till the very last moment, saying it was their firm policy not to allow any hijacked aircraft to make even an emergency landing at any of their airports. They relented only after the Government of India succeeded in contacting the Foreign Minister and Defence Minister and seeking their intervention.

CSO: 5650/0113

REPORT, COMMENT ON CONCLUSION OF HIJACKING INCIDENT

G.K. Reddy Report

Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Sep 84 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Sept. 3.

The seven hijackers of the Indian Airlines plane, who were brought to Delhi from Dubai in a chartered American aircraft late last night, were taken to Chandigarh this morning and produced before a Sub-Divisional Magistrate, who remanded them to police custody for 19 days for completing the investigation of the serious crime committed by them. (He ordered them produced again on Sept. 22).

The detectives of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which has been entrusted with the case flew them back to Delhi later today for further interrogation before filing charges against them for violating the Indian Aviation Act, abducting and wrongfully confining the passengers and crew and threatening to blow up the hijacked aircraft.

After the hijackers were brought to Delhi, the Government of India issued a statement thanking the Dubai authorities and the U.S. for their cooperation. The U.S. embassy followed up with a similar statement saying the American negotiators had convinced the Dubai authorities that the best solution to this unfortunate episode would be to return the hijackers to India to face prosecution under Indian laws which did not prescribe death penalty for the offences committed by them.

Hijackers were hoodwinked: The hijackers were apparently kept in the dark about the progress of the diplomatic exchanges that were going on simultaneously over the last few days in Dubai, Delhi and Washington. They were not aware that a CBI team had arrived in Dubai and a group of 30 BSF commandos had been flown the previous night to escort them to Delhi if finally an understanding was reached to send them back to India to face prosecution.

So when the hijackers were taken in two heavily curtained buses to the chartered Boeing 707 belonging to the Global American

Airways parked in a remote corner of the Dubai airport, they thought they were boarding an American plane to fly to the United States. After they were seated separately each in one row the BSF commandos in plainclothes moved in and sat on either side of each of them.

The hijackers became suspicious and tried to put up some resistance but were subdued by the commandos without any use of force. Then the rest of the CBI detectives boarded the plane along with the other Indian officials who accompanied them to Delhi.

Neat job well done: It was a neat job well done and the credit for conducting the sensitive diplomatic exchanges in Delhi and Dubai should go to the Foreign Secretary, Mr. M. K. Rasgotra, who was in constant touch with the U.S. State Department in Washington through the American embassy here, and the Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Romesh Bhandari, who utilised his very close personal contacts with high personalities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to persuade them to send the hijackers back to India to face prosecution. But the issue was clinched by the U.S. State Department which sent a special emissary, Mr. Robert Sayre, from Washington to assist the American Ambassador, Mr. Quincey Lumsden, in urging the Defence Minister of the UAE, Sheikh Muhammed Bin Rashid al Maktoum, to accede to the Indian request.

U.S. stand: The original understanding reached between the Indian, American and Dubai authorities for securing the release of the passengers and the aircraft was that if the hijackers surrendered unconditionally they would be allowed to go to the U.S. although the American officials had warned even at that stage that they would be liable to be pro-

secuted or extradited under the Hague convention. But later the State Department made it quite clear that even to enter the U.S. the hijackers must have some travel papers which India was not prepared to provide since it would have amounted to acquiescing in their bid to proceed to a third country with the avowed intent of evading the consequences of their action.

The U.S. was most reluctant to have these hijackers on its hands because under American laws it was open to anybody to challenge any move for extradition in a court and transform the hearings into a political event for maligning India with all sorts of accusations. So the State Department did its best to persuade the UAE Government to send the hijackers back to India which in its view would be the best solution in the circumstances.

The hijackers are liable to be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than 10 years under Indian laws for the charges that are to be levelled against them.

PTI reports:

The seven Sikh extremists who hijacked an Indian Airlines jetliner on Aug. 24 and were brought here from Dubai late last night are being charged under Sections 506 (criminal intimidation), 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons) and 120 B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC and Sections 4 and 5 of the Anti-Hijacking Act, according to a case registered against them by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The Political Affairs Committee of the Union Cabinet, which discussed the hijack incident today, was told that a senior official of the airline was suspected to have been involved in the hijack.

The CBI Additional Director, Mr. E. N. Ranison, who is heading the investigation team, had consultations with senior Home Ministry officials today.

PM thanks UAE: The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, has expressed gratitude to the UAE for returning the hijackers.

She had in an earlier message through a special envoy to the UAE Government congratulated them for the deft handling of the hijacking affair.

UAE bears flight cost: The Indian Ambassador Mr. Ishrat Aziz, told PTI on the phone from Dubai that the UAE had been "gracious in offering to bear the cost of the special flight that took the hijackers to India."

The UAE Defence Minister was present at the airport last night to supervise the security and other arrangements relating to the hijackers' departure.

The chartered plane came from America only two hours before their departure. It was decided earlier to send the hijackers by an Indian Airlines plane but later for security reasons it was decided to charter an American plane.

The arrival of the plane carrying the hijackers from Dubai was kept a tightly-guarded secret by the airport authorities here with the result that newsmen came to know of it 30 minutes after the hijackers were whisked away to an unknown destination.

U.S., UAE Praised, Pakistan Scored

Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Sep 84 p 8

[Text]

THE RETURN OF the seven hijackers of the Indian Airlines aircraft by the Government of the United Arab Emirates is a just and proper denouement of an unhappy episode. This development is noteworthy in many ways in the international fight against air piracy. It demonstrates that, if only all the nations involved are firm and work with determination to combat terrorism, the perpetrators of a heinous crime like hijacking cannot hope to get away with their deeds. The UAE has been extremely cooperative in extraditing the offenders, and the United States with its stringent laws and its no-nonsense policy in regard to air piracy has been helpful in bringing about a settlement. Indeed, it is significant that notwithstanding the political colour the hijackers gave to their crime, they have been unable to escape extradition and prosecution under the Anti-hijacking Act and the

Indian Penal Code. All this stands in contrast to the attitude of Pakistan which is yet to put on trial the terrorists who hijacked an Indian Airlines aircraft to Lahore in 1981. And Gen. Zia-ul-Haq has declared that hijackers from India in Pakistan's custody—there are 22 of them—will not be tried in the near future on the plea that he wants to avoid a storm being built up on Pakistan's soil for or against India and for or against Sikhs. Such an attitude is in gross violation of the Montreal and the Hague conventions to which Pakistan is a signatory, and the Government of India has in a note drawn Rawalpindi's attention to its obligation to prosecute or extradite the offenders.

The international battle against hijacking has made a significant advance over the years but still remains hobbled by the hesitancy on the part of many States to deal firmly with terrorists espousing a political cause they might sympathise with. The Hague Convention enjoins the signatories to treat hijacking as an ordinary, and not a political, offence and to either extradite the hijackers or submit the case to the competent local authorities for prosecution. The authorities are required to make their decision whether to prosecute or not (based on the nature of the evidence and other matters) in the same manner as in a serious offence under domestic law. A stronger and more definite obligation binding the signatories in every case to prosecute or extradite a hijacker found in its territory was not acceptable to many States which were loathe to give up their discretionary powers completely. The international pilots association has been campaigning for the strict observance of anti-hijacking measures and against countries that have become havens for hijackers. It is time for a more stringent and effective international convention in which all countries agree not to compromise with air piracy in any manner. They must take a firm and positive stand against the crime on the lines of the UAE, if air travel is to be made safer.

CSO: 5650/0116

TRIPURA REBELS REPORTED ENTERING FROM BANGLADESH

Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 2 Sep 84 p 7

[Text] Argatala, Sept 1--Reports of an exodus of fresh batches of Tribal National Volunteer extremists to the State from their hide-outs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh have added to the anxieties of the security authorities.

Three groups, each comprising about 40 rebels, including some trained guerrillas, are now moving along the Atharamura Hill ranges of the North district in the Khowai sub-divisional areas of the West and in the Devatamura and Kalajhari hill regions, in the Amarpur sub-division of the South district, bordering the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The gangs are believed to be led by the TNV frontliner, Kartik Koloi, Mujib Marak and Dilip Koloi. The border security posts and police stations in all three districts have been put on an alert, as the rebels, emboldened by their previous success, may strike any time.

Another TNV gang, which had crossed over to Tripura recently, infiltrated the border again on August 13, on its way back to its Chittagong Hill Tract camp.

Comparative Calm

After the murder of a member of the Army of Tripura People's Liberation Organization near Uchhaibari, in Amarpur sub-division of South district on August 17 by the TNV, a comparative lull now prevails.

A gang of about seven men dragged the ATPLO member, Krishnadhan Reang, out of his house at Durgarambari in the dead of night, hacked him to death somewhere in the jungles and left the body at Uchhaibari, a nearby hill village.

Krishnadhan had surrendered to the Chief Minister, Mr Nripen Chakraborty, few months ago and was recently offered a job by the State Government. He was butchered before he could take up the post.

The Inspector-General of Police, Mr C.L. Gafoor, however denied reports that the TNV was supplied arms by Bangladesh. "They were given sanctuary and some cash in the past, but there is no report of them being provided with arms," he said.

Combings

The State's rebel-infested areas have been divided into operational sectors and regular combings are carried out by the joint detachments of the State police, CRPF and the BSF. An additional BSF battalion has been deployed to strengthen the security posts along Tripura's border with the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Reports from across the border, however, suggest that the TNV chief, Vijay Kumar Harangkhawi, has left for somewhere unknown with some of his followers. He has yet to return to his camp at Singlum. He left camp 10 days ago.

Two Injured

PTI ADDS: Two people were seriously injured when they were assaulted by a gang of five armed TNV men at Manikpur Bazaar, in the North district of Tripura, about 164 km from Agartala, early yesterday.

The police said quoting a delayed report reaching Agartala today that the extremist gang, armed with Stenguns and choppers, raided the market and escaped with Rs 2,000 and large quantities of goods.

CSO: 5650/0115

BRIEFS

PAKISTAN-TRAINED TERRORIST--Sriganganagar (Rajasthan), Aug 29 (UNI)--Ravinder Singh Sethi, alleged Sikh extremist, has reportedly confessed to the local police that he was given arms and ammunition by the Pakistan military authorities with the instruction to use "one bullet on one Hindu." Sethi, 25, a law graduate, was arrested on 27 August. At his instance police recovered one Italian-made sten gun, six hand grenades, three revolvers, 158 cartridges and Rs 500 in cash, allegedly given to him by Pakistani military officers in Lahore for "terrorist activities in India." Mr Zile Singh, in charge of city kotwali, told newsmen here that the 25-year-old youth, believed to be a member of the banned All India Sikh Students Federation said during interrogation that he had crossed into Pakistan with three others on 9 June last and reported to Pakistani authorities at Lal Bamba checkpoint. He told police that he was received warmly there and kept at ranger's headquarters for nine days during which he was trained in firing various weapons. After training he and two others were provided arms, new clothes and Rs 500 each before being sent back. The arms and ammunition had been kept buried in a local college campus. Mr D.K. Dutta, special Inspector-General of Police (Intelligence) said that though he had not received full report, "the details seem to be highly exaggerated." Ganganagar police are looking for the other two men who crossed into India with the alleged extremists. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 30 Aug 84 p 1]

CSO: 5650/0114

EFFORTS BY IRAN TO RENEW LINKS WITH U.S. REPORTED

Beirut AR-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English No 23, 17 Sep 84 pp 4-5

[Article by Randa Takieddine: "Iran Trying to Renew Links With U.S. in Bid for Gas Technology"]

[Text]

The Iranian oil minister, Mohammed Gharazi, and officials from the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) are trying to re-establish links with American oil companies to persuade them to return to Iran, where their technology is sorely needed, say well informed sources in Paris. Mr Gharazi's recent trip to London was directly linked to the re-establishment of discreet links with American companies, who are particularly needed to supply gas reinjection techniques to avoid losses from producing wells.

While official confirmation of this policy is unobtainable, *An-Nahar Arab Report & MEMO* asked a former senior official in the NIOC, who for 30 years under the Shah's regime was one of his country's most influential oil figures, to discuss the report.

"Unless you inject large quantities of gas to maintain the pressure of the reservoir and to prevent the movement of the oil column under the oil, you are likely to lose a considerable part of the reserves," he explained. "These techniques were introduced into Iran some eight years ago. After long and detailed study, we concluded that we could add some 15bn to 16 billion barrels to our recoverable oil reserves.

"So, we started gas injection: first, with a large reservoir and then we were going to apply it to all the projects," he said. "After the revolution, this gas injection plan was halted because gas gathering, compression and injection is a very complex technique. Even before the revolution, none of the top management in the NIOC had the needed expertise. We still needed the expertise of a number of foreign oil companies who had been working for us as contractors but under Iranian management.

"Now, two things have happened," he went on. "One: after the revolution most of the top executives

in NIOC left because they could not work with the new regime. And, of course, all the American companies left because of the breakdown in relations between the US and Iran. So, now they lack both skilled Iranian management and the US technical expertise.

"What you have said, is true [that Iran is trying to re-establish links with US companies]," he said. "I have heard this information, although I am no longer in direct touch with Iran. However, I do work as a petroleum consultant and I am in touch with the companies.

"With the pressure in the reservoirs declining, the water is moving up and some of the oil is trapped in the oil column and is no longer recoverable," he explained. "So, the sooner they start, the less will be the loss and the damage."

Asked whether Iran could ever get back to a production level of six million barrels a day, he said that this was impossible unless new discoveries were made. However, he pointed out that exploration was currently at a minimum. "Before the revolution, there were 45 rigs continually exploring new areas. But even that has declined to a low minimum. So chances of discovering new reserves are very minimal at this stage."

On the question of whether Iraq could completely paralyse the oil terminal at Kharg Island, the source said: "You have to remember that the complex at Kharg was built to export seven million barrels of oil a day. You must also realise that the whole

set-up — storage tank, pumping stations, submarine lines, jetties and sea lines — ends up as two installations, on the east and west of the island. On the east, you have a T-shaped jetty capable of taking up to ten tankers at a time. But it has a capacity of 250,000 tonnes. This jetty is connected to the island by a steel structure like any other jetty.

"On the west side, there is a sea island — just as you have at Ras Tanura — which is connected to the main island, not by a steel structure, but by sea lines which carry the oil to the sea islands," he said.

"The sea island can take three tankers, each of 300,000 to 500,000 tonnes," he said. "Now, this is where the oil ends and where it is loaded onto the tankers. If the Iraqis can destroy the east jetty and the sea island, the other facilities on the island would be useless. So, the only way to block the oil exports is to destroy the eastern jetty — which would stop about two-thirds of the oil — and the western sea island, which would be about one-third of the export capacity. You do not have to destroy the island, only the jetties.

"But personally, I do not see, at his stage, that capability in the Iraqi air force."

Finally, the source spoke about last month's fall in Iranian oil production. "Exports are currently 1.1mn to 1.2mn barrels a day, from a total production of 1.8mn barrels. The Iranians have reduced the discounts they had been offering oil purchasers. However, many companies have stopped buying from Iran since there is still more oil on the market than there is need. So, companies have the choice."

CSO: 4600/22

NVOI ASSAILS IRAN'S ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA

TA282034 (Clandestine) National Voice of Iran in Persian 1730 GMT 28 Sep 84

[Unattributed commentary: "The People Do Not Buy the Idle Talk of the Islamic Rulers"]

[Excerpts] Dear compatriots: Leaders of the Islamic regime seized power and launched a savage and treacherous assault against the true revolutionary forces. They have made anticommunism and anti-Sovietism the current policy of their government in order to curry favor with the British and U.S. imperialists. After every setback--whether in domestic affairs or at the front of the imposed war--they escalate hostile propaganda against communists and the Soviet Union. Without the slightest sense of shame or decency they try to impudently attribute the plots of their British and American masters to the real friends of the Iranian Nation.

As we are aware, recently officials of the Islamic regime and its propaganda organizations launched a new round of hostile propaganda against our neighboring country, the Soviet Union. Life has shown to everyone that it is only U.S. imperialism and its Western allies that do not stop plotting and conspiring against the Iranian people and revolution. By trying to fan the flames of war between Iran and Iraq--which also suits the taste of the Islamic regime's warmongering leaders--they aggravate the already tense situation in the Persian Gulf in order to fish in troubled waters. This is in line with their evil intentions and aims at destroying the remaining revolutionary gains of our nation.

Life has also shown to everyone that, contrary to this hostile stance by international imperialism and which is headed by world-devouring America, socialist countries, and foremost of all the USSR, are decisively defending the Iranian people and revolution against imperialist plots. Our homeland's people are well aware that the Soviet Government had and continues to have a clear-cut stance against the plots of U.S. imperialism which endanger the regions' peace and security.

Despite the false claims by leaders of the Islamic regime, everyone knows that during the entire period of the Iran-Iraq war the Soviet Union has consistently declared that it favors ending this war so as to prevent it from expanding. It is U.S. imperialism that needs the war, because by exploiting

the war America escalated and continues to escalate its military presence in the Persian Gulf. The Soviet Union, however, has not dispatched any naval force to the area but has condemned the actions of the United States.

Under such circumstances leaders of the Islamic regime try to distort the policy of the Soviet Government, which is based on the principle of supporting peace and security in the region, as well as supporting nations of the region against the plots of the imperialists, in order to divert public opinion from the plots of imperialism. Our homeland's people no longer buy the idle talk of Islamic regime's leaders. They know quite well who their friends and foes are. Our nation knows that the intensification of an anti-Soviet climate by the Islamic rulers is an indication of a new plot by them against the Iranian revolution and nation.

CSO: 4640/43

OPPOSITION PAPER ON AYATOLLAH GOLPAYEGANI'S ILLNESS

GF031400 London KEYHAN in Persian 27 Sep 84 p 2

[London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] According to confirmed reports from Tehran, Ayatollah Golpayegani is ill and resting at his home in Qom. The first official report concerning his illness was aired by the radio of the Islamic Republic on Wednesday night's midnight newscast, adding that Ayatollah Hoseyn 'ali Montazeri visited Ayatollah Golpayegani at his house.

For some time the mass media of the Islamic Republic, which is controlled by the regime, had not mentioned Ayatollah Golpayegani. However, the radio of the Islamic Republic reported an audience by Ayatollah Golpayegani granted to members of the headquarters for celebration of war week in its Sunday program also reported a short excerpt of his speech.

Ayatollah Golpayegani, like Ayatollah Mar'ashi-Najafi, irrespective of his disagreement with Khomeyni's views, has also stressed the need for a victory in the war by the warriors of Islam even though from a different point of view to that of Khomeyni. The radio of the Islamic Republic on Sunday quoted Ayatollah Golpayegani's address to members of the headquarters for the celebration of war week on "the need for correct propaganda to boost popular morale and the morale of the armed forces." During recent months, Ayatollah Golpayegani has expressed his concern to Khomeyni through various means over the dangers that will threaten the clerical society in Iran.

CSO: 4640/39

NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT'S RESOLUTION ON MONARCHY

GF020644 (Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian 1330 GMT 1 Oct 84

[Text] The council of the National Resistance Movement of Iran [NRMI] in a recent session issued a resolution based on a speech by Dr Shapur Bakhtiar, leader of the NRMI, during ceremonies marking the anniversary of the constitutional uprising, for the information of our compatriots on the indisputable views of the movement:

1. A constitutional monarchy in the present conditions of the world is the most suitable regime for Iran.
2. The constitutional monarch is the symbol of independence, national unity, and the guarantor of the total implementation of the constitution. According to the constitution, the Shah has no administrative duties and his powers are spiritual and he should not engage in any administrative work for the sake of the country.
3. Our position against those who deny the constitution and a constitutional monarchy is clear. However, we will not forget that they are also Iranians and have the same rights as us. Anyone who does not have the same opinion as us is not necessarily our enemy!
4. In our opinion, anyone who believes in the two principles of national sovereignty and respect for the rights of minorities can live in Iran's society of tomorrow in peace with other Iranians. We totally condemn the attitude that whatever replaces Khomeyni is going to be better. The bitter experience of terror, insecurity and trampling of nationalism is still facing us.
5. What the Iranian nation desires is security, social rights, and participation in national affairs. Iran's liberation is subject to the struggles and efforts of Iranians themselves.
6. We consider groups whose programs about eradication of nationalism and enslavement to antifreedom ideologies are clear, to be more dangerous than Khomeyni.
7. In our view the opportunists who are mostly decadent individuals and who have assumed the facade of constitutionalism in order to reach the center of power are making the work of the Shah difficult and are creating a dam against

the progress of democracy and its gradual establishment in Iran. They have nothing to do with constitutional monarchy and went to reach the centers of power, whoever and whatever it may be. Our noble desires which are based on national sovereignty and the maintenance of the rights of the minorities must not be mixed with the desires of this gang of power hungry charlatans.

8. the NRMI in response to the decisive demand of the Iranian nation concerning the establishment of national sovereignty criticizes and severely condemns the actions of former allies and agents of Khomeyni in explaining changes and transformations of the ruling regime of mullahs. The council believes that the regime of mullahs is incapable of change and any government born out of the bosom of this regime will be condemned by the Iranian people. Any such efforts are subject to defeat and degeneration due to reasons stemming from the nature of the clerical leadership. The Islamic Republic regime which has superficially attempted to make its position more moderate due to its loss of domestic social support and international isolation will assume its natural attitude as soon as the crisis is over--as its bloody history shows--and those who believe that such explanations will lead to foreign support have no aim but to obtain power as their record shows and their actions are without any desire for justice and freedom.

[Signed] The National Resistance Movement of Iran--Paris

CSO: 4640/40

CLANDESTINE RADIO REPORTS ON MAJLIS PROBLEMS

GF020510 (Clandestine) Radio Nejat-e Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 1 Oct 84

[Text] The widening differences in the so-called Islamic Majlis may result in the dissolution of this Majlis. Radio Nejat-e Iran's correspondent in Tehran reports that the cliques of Majlis mullahs and the clashes between the various factions have taken an overt form. The Tehran bazaar merchants have begun holding meetings, in favor and against [Majlis bills], in their own homes. Since these sessions are held with the presence of one or two of the Majlis deputies, the guards or other law enforcement officials of the regime have not been able to prevent the convening of such sessions.

The Radio Nejat-e Iran correspondent adds that in Tehran, there is a rumor that Azari-Qomi has sent an open letter to Ruhollah Khomeyni vehemently criticizing the conduct of those clergymen close to Khomeyni and whose hands are tainted with despicable acts. According to Azari-Qomi, most of the clergymen of the regime are guilty of crimes through organizations under Khomeyni's control.

In the capital, Ahmad Khomeyni has been quoted as saying that Khomeyni demanded an explanation from Hashemi-Rafsanjani about the weakness of the so-called Islamic Majlis management and said that if you cannot administer the clergymen whom you have placed in the Majlis, I will order the dissolution of the Majlis.

Meanwhile the showdowns between government officials and Majlis members continue and in every session most of the opposing members of the proposed bills reveal much about discrepancies in government machinery.

CSO: 4640/41

OPPOSITION PAPER ON CHANGE IN ARMS PURCHASE POLICY

London KEYHAN in Persian 20 Sep 84 p 1

[Text] With the approval of a single article bill, the responsibility for Iran's military procurement has been given to the Ministry of Defense. The government of Mir Hoseyn Musavi-Khamene'i is thus trying to assume a position against rumors concerning corruption in arms purchases. To date there has been a number of published reports concerning a \$50 million embezzlement by a number of arms dealers in cooperation with the late Ayatollah Beheshti. The single article bill is as follows:

In order for the Ministry of Defense to be able to carry out its legal duties properly, from the date of the approval of this bill, the armed forces' accounting office, controller and the accounts department as well as all its personnel and equipment will be turned over to the Ministry of Defense. All armed forces' purchase departments abroad will also operate under the supervision of the Ministry of Defense.

Brigadier General Zahirnezhad, chief of the joint staff, opposed this bill as did a number of Majlis deputies but it was passed due to pressure by the Majlis speaker, Hashemi-Rafsanjani. According to experts, the approval of the bill means that the armed forces no longer have any control over the purchase of military equipment, which totaled \$13 billion in 1982.

CSO: 4640/44

'CONTRADICTION REPORTS' ON RECENT EXPLOSIONS IN TEHRAN

GF291510 (Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian 1330 GMT 28 Sep 84

[Excerpts] Two contradictory reports on an accident which happened in Tehran yesterday were printed in JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI and KEYHAN have once again disgraced the plotting regime of Iran in the eyes of the world.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI reported yesterday that a vehicle carrying explosives was discovered near Evin prison but KEYHAN said that two vehicles carrying explosives exploded near the HAYYET Hotel. JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI wrote that the driver of the vehicle had intended to take the car near Evin prison, in [words indistinct] report of KEYHAN there is no mention of this.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, the ruling party's organ, wrote--as a result of the alertness of the prison wardens, the vehicle had no choice but to turn away from the prison and head toward the Hayyet Hotel. KEYHAN did not mention this exciting escape and the alertness of the wardens of Asadollah Lajvardi's prison.

Soon after these two contradictory reports appeared, Iran watchers speculated that the goal of the report in the ruling regime's newspaper is to strengthen Asadollah Lajvardi who, according to rumors in Tehran, will be dismissed shortly.

CSO: 4640/42

BRIEFS

CAR-KIT SALES RESUMED--Talbot UK--The British subsidiary of France's Peugeot car makers--is to resume supplies of motor car kits after a seven-week suspension because of a delay in payment from Iran. The contract for the Paykan, as it is known locally, is worth £120mn (\$150mn) a year and is Britain's largest motor-industry export. Talbot announced last week that it was recalling about 750 workers to its Stone, Coventry engine plant following the receipt of letters of credit reported to be worth £15 mn (\$19.5mn). The payment delays are thought to reflect recent low oil sales by Iran. The company, which announced a trading profit last year for the first time in ten years, is understood to be heavily dependent on the Iran contract; while, for political reasons, the British government would also like to see commercial links with Iran maintained. There is a separate £15mn contract to supply motor vehicle spares. Plans are also reported under way for a new series of medium-range cars, so far called only the C28, to be built at the company's nearby Pyton plant. Production, which is expected to begin in late 1985, will require £20mn investment, but is understood to have Iranian backing. The company made a profit of £3.1 mn last year, the first since 1974, but the suspension of production this year makes a repeat performance this year unlikely. [Text] [Beirut AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English No 23, 17 Sep 84 p 10]

BID FOR FRC PLANT--Iran has offered 15mn Deutschemarks (\$5mn) for the West German motor-cycle plant of Zuendapp-Werke, reports from Munich said last week. An official Iranian delegation was in Munich to discuss the proposal, which, if agreed, would involve shipping the entire plant to Iran. Iran expects to produce some 60,000 motor-cycles a year as the fastest method of meeting the high local demand for motorcycles as a means of popular, cheap transport. Zuendapp, one of the last West German motorcycle manufacturers, is expected to file for bankruptcy this week following a near collapse of the home market. The company has accumulated debts of Dm35mn (\$11.7mn) and will have to lay off about 730 workers. [Text] [Beirut AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English No 23, 17 Sep 84 p 10]

FRC'S MAJOR TRADING PARTNER--With West German exports to Iran reaching \$3.74bn in 1983 the Islamic Republic is fast emerging as one of West Germany's main trading partners. The trend is expected to continue to rise, says the annual report of the Iran-West German Chamber of Commerce. West German imports from Iran over the period were \$920mn. Bonn is expected to take steps, including more scientific and technical aid and cooperation with Iran, to help correct the widening trade deficit. [Text] [Beirut AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English No 23, 17 Sep 84 p 10]

ANTI-PAKISTAN PROPAGANDA DECRIED

GF291702 Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 16 Sep 84 p 3

[Editorial: "The Propaganda About the Pakistan Atomic Bomb"]

[Text] The U.S. CIA spy organization has informed U.S. officials that military advisors to Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi are putting pressure on her for India to attack the atomic energy plant at Kahuta in Pakistan. In this matter Israel is providing India with the necessary know-how to plan the proposed attack.

A broadcast by U.S. television on this matter shows the gravity of the situation. It shows that India has already found an excuse for such aggression by saying that since Pakistan is building an atomic bomb, it should be punished.

Unfortunately propaganda about Pakistan's atomic bomb has been ongoing. Pakistan's assurances denying the allegation are hardly being accepted in Europe and the United States though Pakistan has repeatedly said that it is not making the bomb nor is it engaged in trying to build one. However, under pressure and propaganda by the Zionist lobby, the news on the "Islamic bomb" is being magnified. Efforts are also being made to stop aid to Pakistan as a consequence of such propaganda.

However, the bogey of a Pakistani atomic bomb is nothing new. Much before this the United States had withdrawn its aid from Mr Bhutto on the same grounds. The United States was then under the impression that Mr Bhutto, in collusion with Libya and certain other countries of the Arab world, was engaged in producing a bomb. Now even if Mr Bhutto is no more, certain circles in the United States still believe that Pakistan is continuing its old game. Under these circumstances it is not difficult to understand that India would rather use the opportunity and may try to get a green light to attack Pakistan's atomic center.

There are still many powerful people in the United States who fear that once Pakistan succeeds in making a bomb, it will be used not only against India but it may be used by certain Arab countries against Israel as a powerful lever. When Pakistan has built a bomb, it would adversely affect U.S. interests all over the world. An atomic bomb in the hands of Pakistan is in fact hated by both the United States and the USSR equally. However, these are the very circumstances India wants to exploit to its own advantage.

Because of this, our rulers must on the one hand assure the United States that Pakistan is not making the bomb and on the other hand convince the United States that if this state of doubt continues against Pakistan's peaceful intentions, India will probably take advantage of the hostile feelings against Pakistan.

There is one point that should be kept in mind. The United States or the Western world for that matter is hardly worried about the atomic preparations of India. Somehow they believe that an atomic bomb in India is in responsible hands and will never be used against Israel. But in Pakistan's case, the opinion is quite the opposite. To change that attitude, both in the United States and the Western world, much work and propaganda will be needed. It will take some effort to make the U.S. and Western leaders change their attitudes toward Pakistan's real intentions. If this is not done in time, India will enlist backing for its aggression and might well succeed. When this happens, it will be fatal to our interests.

CSO: 4656/5

STRONG SECURITY MEASURES FOR NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS URGED

GF021538 Rawalpindi HAIDAR in Urdu 18 Sep 84 p 3

[Editorial: "Nuclear installations--Fears and Security Measures"]

[Excerpts] U.S. intelligence experts on South Asian affairs have informed Senate members of possibilities of an Indian attack on Pakistan's nuclear installations and that India is enlisting Israeli support for the same.

Such information has emanated from U.S. sources and there is no reason that it should be considered baseless or should be ignored as fabrication. The exigency demands that those who are responsible for our defense arrangements take a fresh look at existing security arrangements for our nuclear installations and if there is any loophole it should be taken care of immediately. Our other suggestion is that we should be ready for any reciprocal action and we should make it clear through diplomatic channels that if India is not ready to waive its insane plans, not a single Indian nuclear installation will be left standing.

The only way to avert danger and to bring the opponent to his senses is to make it clear that a brick will be returned with a boulder. We hope that those at the helm of affairs will pay maximum attention to defense arrangements and will use all diplomatic means to make India aware of the dangerous repercussions of its nefarious designs so that the Indian people force their leaders to adopt a sane and compromising policy.

The need of the hour is to drive home to the Indian people that they will suffer untold destruction due to the dangerous policy of their government. In this regard, our Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should brief the radio and television authorities on the same. As regards alleged Indian-Israeli collusion, we would like to inform our Foreign Ministry that if Israel ever connives with India in an attack on our nuclear installations, the United States will be held totally responsible and Pakistan will be justified in revising its relations with the United States.

In our opinion it will be appropriate to soften the Soviet Union's mood vis-a-vis Pakistan if our approach toward the Afghan issue could be more flexible so that the Soviet Union should not feel the need to instigate India against Pakistan and should be willing to use its influence to initiate some sort of talks between New Delhi and Islamabad. We are positive that a change in our government's policy on Afghanistan can motivate the Soviet Union to play a more positive role in the improvement of the Indo-Pakistan relations.

TALKS WITH INDIA ON NUCLEAR ISSUE PROPOSED

GF011201 Rawalpindi HAIDAR in Urdu 21 Sep 84 p 3

[Editorial: "Advice for the Indian Leaders"]

[Text] President Ziaul Haq was answering correspondents' questions at the opening of a seminar in Islamabad. He said that Pakistan had made all possible arrangements for the safety at its nuclear installations, which have been set up for peaceful purposes, and that details of the report alleging that India was preparing to attack its nuclear installations have also been requested.

We hope that there will be no truth in these allegations and India will not resort to such actions which would be a precursor to a full-fledged war. The president's reassurance on the security of the nuclear installations is heartening and the demanding of details and clarification from the Government of India is an indication of the fact that the president is ready to discuss any misconception regarding the objectives of its nuclear programs. We laud the President's stand and we request the Indira government to revise its decision on a postponement of bilateral talks until after the elections and to agree that negotiations will be mutually advantageous. All those problems that are at present straining Indo-Pakistan relations will be more easily resolved at the conference table by the two parties.

We feel that Mrs Gandhi should pay more attention to improving relations with Pakistan before the elections in her country if she wishes to win the approval of her own compatriots for such a constructive attitude. This will also brighten the prospects of her election campaign because the Indian people also desire peace.

We are optimistic that the clarification demanded by Pakistan regarding a possible attack on Pakistan's nuclear installation will be answered in a reassuring manner, and that it will be accompanied by New Delhi's positive reply on talks with Islamabad.

CSO: 4656/5

END